



Dear Council Members, City Staff and Community,

As the year draws to a close, the City of Nevada City stands stronger as a result of the City Council's leadership and hard work of City staff, and is better prepared for the challenges the New Year will bring. This 2015 Year in Review highlights organizational accomplishments during the past 12 months and provides a glimpse of projects and opportunities on the horizon.

### **City Council Goal: Improving Financial Stability and Sustainability**

In keeping with the City Council's goal to improve fiscal stability and sustainability, the City's General Fund has maintained an improving economic financial position for the fourth consecutive year. The City closed 2014/15 with an unassigned General Fund balance of \$346,000 and reserves equal to \$848,000, including \$125,000 in operational reserves and \$40,000 in pension reserves. While Measure L contributed significantly to the City's improving fiscal picture, the steady financial leadership of Assistant City Manager Catrina Olson and disciplined fiscal stewardship by City staff have also been instrumental in improving the City's financial position.

The City Council's 2015 adoption of the NCFORWARD economic plan contributes strategies designed to enhance the City's financial sustainability. The plan further positions the City for accelerated business growth and prosperity by helping to create an environment where business thrives. Implementing monthly Business Walks in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce, developing a plan to simplify the City's Business License Tax, and establishing funds to support community programs and Nevada City commerce were early plan highlights started in 2015.

### **City Council Goal: Improve Aging City Infrastructure**

The City was hard at work in 2015 improving the City's infrastructure. In addition to investing more than \$600,000 in Measure S street paving, the City completed sidewalk improvements on East Broad Street providing safe passage from downtown to the East Broad Street-North Bloomfield Road-Highway 49 intersection. Upper Nevada Street sidewalk improvements were also made to remedy street tree damage and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb cuts were added to downtown. The City's Corporation Yard was repaved and the parking lot at Hirschman's Trail was paved for the first time. Grant-funded waterlines were replaced on Prospect Street and Park Avenue.

The City also launched a strategic planning effort earlier this year to prioritize water and wastewater capital improvement projects for the City's aging water and wastewater systems. This condition assessment is expected to result in the scoping of 80 projects and help the City secure grant resources to offset improvement costs. Grant-funded improvements to replace manual controls with computer automation are already underway at the City's water plant.

## **City Council Goal: Facilitate Preservation of the City's Historical Environment**

The City Council's goal to facilitate preservation of the City's historical environment was greatly aided in 2015 by a comprehensive update to the City's 20-year-old Design Guidelines. Kudos to recently retired City Planner Cindy Siegfried for her leadership in guiding this update and securing unanimous Planning Commission and City Council approval. The resulting 76-page document now includes illustrations, and historical and current photographs to help users visualize the guidelines and understand City expectations regarding historic preservation and development.

The City-owned Good & Co. Realty Building adjacent to historic Fire Station No. 2 received a much-needed maintenance overhaul including dry-rot and damaged porch repairs, a new paint job, and new gutters.

The City also submitted a Sustainable Communities Planning Grant to the State to secure funding to explore options for covering Highway 49 through downtown Nevada City, mitigating noise, and restoring Broad Street connectivity. While the proposal was not selected for funding, the City will continue to explore options to address these challenges.

## **City Council Goal: Address Homeless & Transient Population Issues**

The City continues to actively address illegal camping throughout town. Police and Public Works staff have participated in camp cleanups and worked with volunteer groups to remove related trash and debris.

The City extended a Cold Weather Shelter Agreement in late 2015 that provides a framework to assist the City's most vulnerable residents during extreme weather conditions. Volunteers operated a Cold Weather Shelter over the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays when temperatures dipped into the mid-20s.

## **Other Notable 2015 Achievements**

The City Council and staff provided leadership on a number of other issues throughout 2015. Several notable achievements and community highlights are summarized below:

- Drought rules were enacted to help achieve a state-required 25% water use reduction. Citizen efforts and ingenuity on the part of the City's wastewater staff resulted in a citywide water usage reduction of more than 40% vs. 2013 figures.
- The City Council strengthened the City's No-Smoking Ordinance by extending the ordinance to commercial building entry ways, and prohibiting e-cigarettes and other electronic devices.
- The City Council authorized the acquisition of Canine Officer Rüdiger, which was generously provided by the Sean M. Walsh K-9 Memorial Foundation ([www.seansk9s.com](http://www.seansk9s.com)). Officer Scott Goin is partnered with Officer Rüdiger.
- The City transitioned to digital delivery of City Council and Planning Commission agenda materials, resulting in an estimated savings of more than 100 staff hours annually and \$3,900 of expenses previously associated with copying.

- The Police Department's Community Connect program's "Cup with a Cop" series debuted and has developed a faithful following at local coffee shops.
- The City Council approved a Public Safety Loan Program to assist Police and Fire staff with acquisition of supplemental City-approved safety equipment they desire to use on the job.
- The City Council adopted an Energy Action Plan that provides a roadmap for expanding energy-efficiency and renewable-energy efforts in the City.
- City staff volunteered to assist with citywide volunteer cleanups, organized their own cleanups on Spring Street and at Seaman's Lodge, and participated in community events.
- The City welcomed several new businesses including Wheyward Girl Creamery, Los Mineros, Mi Pueblo Taqueria, Golden Era Lounge and LeeAnn Brook Fine Art.
- The City served as the Host City for the Amgen Tour of California Stage 2 start.
- The City Police Department joined communities nationwide and organized a "National Night Out" event August 4<sup>th</sup> for the first time.

### **What's on the Horizon?**

Several projects and opportunities are looming on the 2016 horizon:

- The planned renovation of the City's pool surface in Pioneer Park.
- The Inn Town Campground will open in mid-2016 providing a significant boost to and diversification of tourist lodging.
- The City Council will identify a recommended path to sustainably fund the City's Fire Station which was previously co-staffed by the Consolidated Fire District.
- The City will complete a compensation study and negotiate successor labor agreements with its employee bargaining units.
- A new City website will be launched providing a fresh update and expanded services for the community.
- It is anticipated the 59-unit Grove Subdivision adjacent to the Nevada City Tech Center will commence construction.
- Efforts to launch the job-creating Sierra Digital Media Campus will accelerate.
- A preservation strategy will be developed to address severe building deficiencies with Historic Fire Station 2, as well as needed improvements to Historic Fire Station No. 1.