



*City of Florence*  
**A City in Motion**

**City of Florence  
Community & Economic Development  
Committee Work Plan  
June 2021 – June 2022**

**Community & Economic Development Committee (CEDC) Overview:**

The Community & Economic Development Committee was established in 2019, formed by the Florence City Council in November 2018. The Community & Economic Development Committee endeavors to advise the City Council and implement the provisions of the City Council goals and work plan related to the City’s community and economic development initiatives.

The objective of this work plan is to create priorities for the 2021 and 2022 biennial cycle. In Florence City Code Title 2, Chapter 2, the City Council directed the CEDC to advise the council and implement the provisions of the City Council goals and work plan related to Community and Economic initiatives.

The Community and Economic Development Committee understands the large scope of work that they have been tasked with by the City Council and has many different ideas on how to focus on the Committee’s strengths and interests. The CEDC has prioritized four projects of their work plan, with additional projects listed afterwards.

| <b>Committee Members</b>    |                                     |                                 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Jeff Ashmead, Chairperson   |                                     | Robbie Wright Vice-Chairperson  |
| Dan Lofy                    | Brian Holmes                        | Russ Pierson                    |
| Jonathan Bailey             | Carla Twombly                       | Nick Costa                      |
| Peggy Meyer, PAC Ex-Officio | Mayor Joe Henry, Council Ex-Officio | Sarah Moehrke, Staff Ex-Officio |

## **Top Four Committee Priorities:**

### **Career Technical Education & Career Discovery Programs:**

Career Technical Education (CTE) provides students of all ages with the academic and technical skills, knowledge, and training necessary to succeed in future careers. The CEDC believes that the City of Florence can and should be a convener to combine the expertise of local business leaders with students at the Siuslaw School District to provide hands-on experiences through job shadows, internships, apprenticeships, and other career discovery programs.

*The CEDC's next steps regarding supporting Career Technical Education and Career Discovery Programs are...*

- Continue to foster a relationship with Connected Lane County to recruit and manage businesses to participate in:
  - Informational Interviews (virtual or in-person)
  - Business Tours (virtual or in-person)
  - Job Shadows
  - Other Career Discovery Programs, as needed
- Work with City Staff and other economic development partners to develop youth workforce programs, including researching opportunities for youth-employment incentive programs
- Support and promote current programs to local businesses and interested parties.

*CEDC Interested Parties:* Jonathan Bailey, Brian Holmes, Russ Pierson

*Timeline for Project Completion:* Late Winter, Early Spring 2022

### **Business Retention & Expansion:**

Vibrant communities have a healthy economy with a diverse set of economic activity relating to job growth and business growth. Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) is an economic development strategy of proactively connecting with existing businesses to understand and respond to their needs. The City of Florence partnered with Rural Development Initiatives in 2020 to complete an initial BR&E program and design a program that could be reused in the future, including survey tools, focus group support, and a final report that noted strengths and weaknesses in the Florence economy.

*The CEDC's next steps regarding supporting Business Retention & Expansion efforts are...*

- Continue to do business outreach to learn how the City could better support businesses
  - Conduct business survey
  - Conduct business interviews / focus groups
- Improve communication between business community and City of Florence

*CEDC Interested Parties:* Nick Costa, Robbie Wright

*Timeline for Completion:* Late Fall / Early Winter 2021

### **Rental Market Study:**

The City of Florence must conduct a rental market survey to collect information about the current long-term rental housing market. This is important for future building projects and future grant funding for housing needs. The study will be conducted by CEDC members, who will create the survey tools and distribute it to both rental owners and renters.

*The CEDC's next steps regarding supporting a Rental Market Study are...*

- Create survey tools, including creating a rental market area map, and digital and paper versions of survey tool
- Promote survey through media partners, marketing materials and word-of-mouth
- Analyze results of survey tools and create final report for Florence City Council

*CEDC Interested Parties:* Jeff Ashmead, Jonathan Bailey

*Timeline for Completion:* Spring / Summer 2021

### **Disk Golf Course Installation:**

The City of Florence is actively working with Oregon Coast Visitors Association to install a disk golf course at the Munsel Creek Park at Willow Street and 24<sup>th</sup> Street, near the Water Treatment Plant. This project will not only create a new tourism draw but will also create a new type of recreation for local area community members. Disc Golf is a low-cost, widely accessible sport for all ages.

*The next steps for the installation of the Disk Golf Course are...*

- Support OCVA staff to recruit volunteers for installation work parties
- Market and Promote Disk Golf Course once installation is completed
- Research fundraising events associated with the disk golf course to promote the new recreational activity

*CEDC Interested Parties:* Robbie Wright, Nick Costa, Dan Lofy, Carla Twombly

*Timeline for Completion:* Summer / Fall 2021

### **Other Projects:**

#### **Workforce Development:**

The backbone to a healthy economy is a viable workforce. Throughout the last year, there have been many complications and issues that have caused the workforce in the City of Florence to diminish and has caused businesses to have trouble finding employees for their businesses. When businesses workers feel supported, the business has a lower turnover rate, increased operational efficiency, and improved productivity. The CEDC intends to support workforce development programs already in progress, as well as any other projects that are developed throughout the year.

#### **Virtual Worker Recruitment Program:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has made people rethink work and where they live. Because many employees of larger companies are becoming full-time remote workers, there is an opportunity to market Florence as a place to live. CEDC intends to work with South Coast Development Council (SCDC) to promote the opportunity to live and virtually work in Florence.

#### **Welcome Gateway Signage:**

The natural beauty of the Oregon Coast is what draws visitors and citizens alike to Florence. As a community, we attract close to one million visitors a year. Committee volunteers will work with City Staff and other community partners to create new gateway signage for our northern, southern, and eastern gateways to our City so that visitors can feel welcome and a sense of place when they arrive in Florence.

**Marketing of Residential Building Programs:**

Since the HEOP project was completed by the City of Florence in 2018, the City of Florence has made significant strides to incentivizing residential building projects. The City, with great help from the CEDC, rehailed the City's residential building codes, allowing for many more types of housing more easily. Additionally, the City has created System Development Charges Discount program to allow for builders who are building smaller houses to take advantage of a discount program to reduce their costs. Finally, the City has created an Accessory Dwelling Unit program that allows for ADU's to be built on most residential properties in the City, allowing for more housing.

Though the City has done a lot of work, the City has not been successful in marketing these programs to the appropriate people. The CEDC would like to create FAQs for each program for ease of builders trying to understand the programs, as well as host events for builders to ask questions and provide feedback to planning and building staff.

**City of Florence Parks Master Plan:**

The City is lucky to have a wide variety of parks for our community members and visitors to recreate in. The City of Florence's Parks Master Plan has not been updated since 2011, and it is time to update it with our new parks and create a vision for the future for the parks program in the City. The CEDC will work with City Staff and other interested parties to create a new master plan for the parks system, including doing public outreach and assisting in marketing and promoting the plan.

**Gallagher Park Expansion Project:**

Gallagher Park is a 3.5-acre site located on the northwest corner of Spruce Street and Highway 126. The land was donated to the City of Florence in 1911 by the Gallagher family. When the land was donated, there was deed restriction placed on the property that the property must be improved and used as a park. Now that the City of Florence has moved the Public Works facility to another location, the expansion of Gallagher Park is ready to happen. The CEDC will assist in conducting public outreach and supporting City Staff in the expansion project.