STRATEGIC PLAN
Executive Summary
2015-2020
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Ladies and Gentlemen:

This is the first year we have compiled Departmental Strategic Plans in concert with a summary long-range strategic plan for the entire City of Woodland. This was done to present clear goals and meaningful strategies for the wide range of programs and services we provide to the community. This Plan is an essential roadmap for Woodland and each year we intend to take steps to further refine and improve it. We have added a reporting element that is used year-round to track progress and make sure we do not lose sight of strategic initiatives while we pursue our daily operations. We are also taking steps to address major challenge areas and are working together to address strategic initiatives that cross multiple departments, other municipalities and local stakeholders.

While some have expressed the desire for greater and more dynamic progress, there is great value in retaining Woodland's posture as a steady and deliberate, yet progressive city. This community is on the move, and its accomplishments are both many and continuous. I anticipate that the number of achievements will continue to grow, as we direct greater attention to economic development, recreation, safe neighborhoods, and highly efficient services. As we collected historic data, it became clear that citizens should be proud of all the progress we have made by assessing challenges, setting goals and finding creative ways to meet our own high expectations.

I am pleased to present this FY 2015-2020 Strategic Plan and would like to personally thank the City Council, Department directors, employees and many community leaders who took time to share their ideas and suggestions during the planning process. Such a comprehensive effort takes significant time as will the important initiatives outlined in this Plan. Each new fiscal year will bring new challenges and opportunities and I am confident that the Woodland community will meet those challenges with more vigor, creativity, insight and commitment due to having this thoughtful, proactive plan.

Sincerely,

Grover Laseke
Mayor
**Preface and Acknowledgements**

Strategic planning has become an essential element of contemporary public administration and is a valuable annual activity for the City of Woodland. It is, however, important to understand that annual strategic plans address the most significant issues and challenges facing the City that relate to every Department’s Mission. A strategic plan is not an operations plan and, as such, does not provide a detailed explanation for day-to-day activities undertaken by each Department. All Departments maintain clear protocols and procedures that guide general operating activities. This strategic plan provides an overview of major driving forces shaping the Woodland community, shares accomplishments achieved over the past several years, and reveals our long-term vision for the City. It also provides a listing of those issues and major challenges that must be addressed, as well as long-term goals that describe intended progress on those major challenges. Finally, this summary plan lists major strategic initiatives that are planned to address and overcome the identified challenges that will impact every aspect of Woodland community life.

Annually, the City will share significant achievements, review Major Challenge Areas, and introduce the most important strategic initiatives that are either underway or planned for the coming year(s). Its Departments will share information on essential issues and provide data that will generate greater understanding of challenges impacting the City. Above all, Department employees are committed to providing the highest level of public service and are interested in sharing critical information and analysis that will protect and preserve the quality of life for all Woodland citizens.

Special recognition and appreciation is expressed to those sharing their ideas and suggestions during the development of this plan:

**City Council Members:** Jennifer Heffernan, Al Swindell, Marilee McCall, Marshall Allen, Susan Humbyrd, Benjamin Fredricks, Scott Perry  
**City Department Directors:** Amanda Smeller, Bart Stepp, Bill Mahoney, Mari Ripp, Michael Jackson  
**City Attorney:** Bill Eling

Again, I would like to especially thank all the community members and leaders, who took time to complete the planning questionnaire and to share their ideas, concerns and suggestions. Your involvement is deeply appreciated and is what makes Woodland a great community.

*Maior Grover Laseke*
OVERVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

As noted in previous conversations, meetings and documents, never before have expectations for public programs been so high. Demand for services has grown, but so too have public scrutiny, competition for limited resources, the complexity of regulations, and security and safety concerns. Along with these, frustrations with of public agencies have also seemed to increase, which is a driving force behind the City’s deep commitment to financial accountability, exceptional quality, consistent performance, and meaningful contribution to the entire Woodland community.

Employees and managers at many levels have been involved with the City’s planning processes. Department plans have been developed with attention paid to historical charters, as well as to current and prospective missions, which have endured as citywide services evolved. Every Department is unique, so each has a stated mission along with a concise plan that shares its challenges, goals and planned actions.

Along with analyzing individual missions, employees from each Department explored their view of the future in terms that could be articulated as a vision. This has been defined in terms of what internal and external challenges will most likely exist in the future, along with the actions considered necessary to meet them over the next several years. Employees also explored their view of what ideals should be pursued over the next decade or two. Coupled with these elements was the operating philosophy, which concisely reviews those values that guide each employee group and, ultimately, each Department. While employees were involved with identifying various plan elements, the City also solicited input from identified community leaders. These individuals represent a broad band of business, financial, voluntary, educational, government, and other sectors that are essential stakeholders in Woodland’s future.

City Council members were also asked to share their views on various issues, challenges, accomplishments and needed initiatives. These were compiled and added to similar input gathered from City departments and community leaders. All information was used to inform the planning process and this plan and helped distill it into a broad-based plan for the entire City.

As with any planning process, multiple reviews identified key issues and challenges each Department is now or will be facing in the future. Whether stated as issues or challenges, these are factors that will engage the City and its operating Departments and many
of Woodland’s private, voluntary and public agencies in the years ahead. The issues and challenges appearing in this document are a compilation and distillation of survey responses.

During the planning process, each Department took considerable time to review significant trends and driving forces impacting the City as well as the entire geographic area. This is important because these trends serve as the foundation for issues and challenges, goals, and major initiatives planned by the City. Once trends were identified, issues and challenges reviewed, and missions clearly stated, employees were able to develop a set of long-term goals that establish clear direction for the next five years. It is important to note that all goals are stated in terms that promote measurability, as part of the City’s commitment to productivity and measured performance.

Following the City’s Mission, Vision, Values, there is a section devoted to the City’s long-term vision, as compiled from survey responses. This section is followed by noteworthy ‘Citywide Achievements,’ which provides an overview of the many contributions the City has made to the greater Woodland community.

As underpinning for major challenges, considerable time was spent gathering data on driving forces and trends shaping the Woodland community. Above all, strategic plans must look over the horizon to determine those impending forces that must be addressed or planned for so they do pose serious threats to the City’s integrity, health or quality of life. ‘Major Challenge Areas’ offers a review of the most significant problems and/or issues the community is facing and must address. Some challenges are internal – detailing issues that will or are now impacting effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, or service quality. Others are external – impacting desired community outcomes that represent quality of life and long-term community prosperity.

An essential element of the summary plan is a set of strategic initiatives that mirror important challenges the Departments and community must contend with. These initiatives represent the most significant actions that will engage City and Departmental services for the next several years. Full prioritization will be accomplished as collaboration occurs within City Departments, Council priorities become clear, and key strategic community partnerships are forged to undertake various initiatives. This will be done annually to allow latitude in operations after the general plan is outlined. Challenges and initiatives may change as priorities change, but both are considered essential to provide clear direction during the period 2015-2020 and beyond.
Individual Departments developed separate standalone planning documents that detail the most significant visions, values, issues, goals, and initiatives identified for the next several years. As a whole, Department plans provide a detailed view of the City’s future, its challenges, and its plans to provide measured improvement in multiple areas. This planning process has allowed the City to initiate a significantly improved level of operating efficiency. While quite effective in the past, all Departments continue to be deeply committed to broader collaboration with many partners to generate an entirely new standard of cost effective service delivery. For Woodland city government, both the process and product of strategic planning have provided new energy, optimism, and direction that will generate significant dividends for Woodland residents and visitors over the next ten years.
DRIVING FORCES AND TRENDS SHAPING THE WOODLAND COMMUNITY

There are a number of converging variables and driving forces impacting the Woodland community. The annual planning process has identified several trends and forces that are now and will continue to affect the City, its business community and its citizens. In order to create a plan, City leaders must first understand what is occurring, analyze how it could impact the community, then develop initiatives and strategies that create counter positions that can reduce or eliminate harmful outcomes. Several variables are problematic as the City plans for 2015 and the remainder of the current decade. The economic recovery remains sluggish, competition for business and jobs is escalating, the community’s rural, non-intrusive nature could hamper progress, growing citizen expectations pressure finite services, and insufficient funding for basic services are all important considerations. Old infrastructure must be repaired and new infrastructure must be developed if Woodland is to remain attractive to industry and relocating families; public safety remains a critical decision point for relocating organizations, as does education, public services, amenities and community culture. All are important and all are being considered as part of the City’s strategic planning process. Among the most important ‘drivers’ are the following:

- Overall reduction in sales tax receipts and not keeping up with other area communities. A 2014 report in the The Reflector newspaper indicated that Woodland was the only community in Clark County that had flat retail sales tax increases 2013 compared to 2012 (year-over-year comparison). This is concerning because, even with detailed and conservative management, the City has uncontrollable costs that continue to rise (materials, insurance, equipment, supplies, etc.). Without sufficient general fund revenue to support the cost of even the most basic services (police, fire, parks, street maintenance, water and sewer systems, etc.) cuts to city services may be inevitable.

- There continues to be a disparity between required surface (street) infrastructure maintenance and insufficient funding. According to the Woodland Public Works Director (July 17, 2013 Public Works memo to the Mayor and City Council) he estimates that existing revenues do not provide enough funds for adequate maintenance of the street system. “I
estimate the city could spend $500,000 a year for the foreseeable future on overlays, chip seals, and crack sealing and still not meet all the City’s maintenance needs.” In 2013 that budget is $140,000, in 2012 it was $253,000 and in 2011 it was $62,127. Aging infrastructure and the need for basic street, facility and utility maintenance is now a serious issue and will become an even more serious issue each year.

- There has been an increase in drug trafficking and drug use in southwest Washington (heroin especially) with resultant increase in crime and the loss of young people and family integrity to this plague. According to County data, this is becoming a serious challenge and will become a major future driver of significant financial and service delivery decisions.

- As a corollary to the above, Woodland has experienced some escalation of the number of crimes, as well as the growing potential for more serious crimes. While the City has been quite safe, there is concern that the I-5 corridor and proximity to major metropolitan areas may bring undesirable factors that promote more criminal activity.

- Due to competing interests, long-term planning is often driven by high-pressure development requests/preferences rather than comprehensive plans that consider and factor in the future of the entire community. Attracting business is critical, but City employees constantly struggle to balance longer term quality of life issues while planning for a community that accommodates commercial and industrial development. The difficulty of balancing conflicting and/ or competing influences is a major driving force that will continue to challenge City and community leaders.

- Mandated health care costs driven by the Affordable Care Act will impact future decisions at multiple levels. The City will continue to be affected by rising health care insurance costs that must be proactive and fairly adjusted across all employees - salaried AND hourly/union as well as single vs. large families. Increased health care costs are unsustainable for the City and could ultimately add costs that reduce needed city services.

- The city has a longstanding culture that tends to resist change. While somewhat idyllic and desirable, if Woodland continues to do things the way it has for 50 years it will ultimately stagnate and wither. This has become a major polarizing attribute within the Woodland community and is impacting the long-term planning and development for future generations. If the City doesn’t adapt and grow there will be no revenue to cover the increased costs to provide the required level and types of services and infrastructure for residents. Decisions driven by community expectations require foresight and balance among competing forces so progress is sustained along with heritage. The City cannot both grow and remain stagnant; unless there
is commitment to progress, it cannot evolve into a destination for new residents, tourists and businesses, as well as continue to be a great place to live/work/play. This is a major force driving community planning and implementation and will require higher levels of City planning, operations, education, and outreach (collaboration).

- Operating effectiveness and efficient use of public services is impacted by insufficient information and low levels of public involvement, creating misunderstandings that reduce trust in City government and misuse of department programs. Woodland and all area cities are facing increased service demands, new technologies, broader communications, calls for greater transparency and more public involvement. This is a universal national trend that will drive government to be more organized, highly efficient, more accountable, and open to citizen involvement.

- Due to its commitment to serve all of its citizens, the City has facilitated the development of more low income housing than any adjacent city, which accommodates a variety of personal and family needs, but has introduced several variables. The developed structures and their occupants require public facilities, schools, roads, emergency services, etc. but are exempt from many of the city’s revenue sources, so provide insufficient ongoing financial support. With no or very little state or federal support, these developments require using funds earmarked for other community infrastructure and service projects so present a balancing challenge for City leaders and managers.

- There has been an evolution of how leadership is defined and the type of public management required for the City. Contemporary public management and decision making is typically balanced among elected officials and a highly trained cadre of experienced professional managers. Woodland has not defined its long-term plan for managing the City’s affairs, which has become a driving force impacting decision-making in and operation of city government.

- Competition from area and adjacent cities has become a driver of change, decisions, and plan development. However, competition from cities such as Ridgefield, Kalama, La Center and others can be both beneficial and detrimental unless Woodland follows its own authentic long-term vision. Because some of these cities appear to have worked together in such activities as developing their water fronts and annexation of property to support and encourage industrial and residential growth, there is obviously greater synergy through collaboration. While a principal driver may seem to be competition, decisions must be viewed through the prism of Woodland’s long-term plan and community vision and not be driven by pure competitive spirit. Only when and where it makes sense should the City commit to compete for new business, jobs, talent and resources.
Significant Citywide Accomplishments
2000-2014

Though a rural city, Woodland has the natural resources, geography and location considered essential for continued development. Even with the challenges associated with a difficult recession, constant competition from other municipalities and natural conservatism, the City has continued to develop and progress. There is a certain pride that conservative budgets and a deep commitment to fiscal accountability have limited the pace of change and restricted all-out development. Rather, progress has been guided by careful planning, a reasonable pace and thoughtful additions that contribute to efficiency, service quality, economic vitality and quality of life. While not all projects can be undertaken at the pace desired by their champions, slow and steady improvement has proven to generate the best possible outcomes for the overall community.

The accomplishments listed below are only some of the more prominent projects undertaken by the City since 2000, but reflect the spirit of consistent progress desired by citizens, elected officials and employees. Many more are underway and will be reported in the City’s annual State of the City address.

- The Exit 22 improvements and the reconstruction of Schurman Way and Guild Road allow increased traffic into the Port area and have created a foundation for long-term growth, coupled with rezoning for Highway Commercial in the Exit 22 area that creates greater potential for future extension and expansion. Not only has this contributed to the potential expansion to a deep water port for Columbia River Carbonates, it has helped attract Safeway, Wal Mart, Les Schwab, O’Reilly’s, a new industrial complex, and several other enterprises. Proudly, many large national enterprises have selected Woodland over other area cities.

- Improvements to Horseshoe Lake Park were accomplished by partnering with other agencies and resulted in a skateboard park, Steamboat Landing, new handicap accessible restrooms, and a needed extension of walking trails.
• The City has experienced significant tax base gains due to welcoming new business enterprises, such as O’Reilly Auto Parts, Wal Mart, Les Schwab tires, etc. Even in a recessionary climate, the City continues to attract business and industry as an engine of steady growth and development.

• Transitioning from a small City Fire Department to a contracted relationship with Clark County Fire and Rescue established an important new direction as Woodland moves toward a Regional Fire Authority. This has been an extended 5-year process but no transition studies or research added any cost to citizens. This new agreement has already resulted in improved ambulance and fire response times and effective delivery of EMS service to Woodland residents. Formalizing the RFA will go to the ballot in March 2015 and will include Woodland, Clark District #2, and Clark County Fire and Rescue as one organization with one Board. LaCenter and Ridgefield are already part of Clark County Fire and Rescue and Battle Ground is served by contract.

• The City established a policy wherein it no longer spends its reserve funds for general operational activities. This allows Woodland to be better prepared for emergent situations, while living within its means for general operations. As a result, the City has introduced operating improvements that make it more efficient and productive, but better prepared for unforeseen events.

• A new water treatment plant was built and improvements to the Ranney Well has reduced water supply deficiencies while adding to long-term capacity and improving community water quality. In addition to satisfying projected supply and peak demand needs, these improvements have strengthened the City’s ability to limit or prevent water borne pathogens and chemical contaminations that are always possible in older unimproved systems.
• Responding to citizen requests, the City has eliminated Wake boarding on Horseshoe Lake, which in turn has reduced erosion and reduced noise while allowing more recreational uses such as paddle boarding, a larger swimming area, kayaking and small recreational boating.

• In 2003 the City built a new wastewater treatment plant. The City has also continued to repair several marginal and/or failing segments of the sewer system. These repairs and improvements have expanded capacity, reduced the prospect of seepage and major failures, and created more options for commercial and residential development. An intact and efficient sewer system also reduces the likelihood of groundwater contamination and highly virulent diseases such as dysentery, cholera and typhoid that can plague communities with eroding sewer systems. To reduce maintenance and long-term sewer replacement issues, the City conducted an analysis and rate structure review for water/sewer, which identified fair and appropriate initial rate changes that allow it to address essential infrastructure maintenance.

• After many years in an inefficient Police Department facility that hampered service and administration, the City built an efficient, cost-effective and more modern public safety facility that houses both the Police Department and citizen friendly City Council chambers that can also serve as a public meeting room. While the City has conscientiously refrained from spending unnecessary funds for public facilities, this new multipurpose building has resulted in better service, quicker access, a more efficient police department, and a Council chamber that accommodates growing requirements for public meetings.

• The City has developed a much greater dedication to economic development with stronger regional contacts that are expected to aid in planning and implementing growth. Woodland is a potent area, with enormous untapped vitality and options that will attract families, tourists, business and industry once the City becomes more active in getting the word out.
• While this is happening, officials and planners are being careful and deliberate to remain true to community values and ensure that whatever development decisions are made, they will provide enduring benefits to the City, its citizens and its neighborhoods.

• Pursuit of great economic vitality has led to a Partnership between the Chamber of Commerce and Port of Woodland, resulting in a successful request for funding from the state for NEPA work for the Scott Avenue crossing. There are growing indications that development of the Port and surrounding industrial land can be balanced with agricultural businesses that epitomize the longstanding values and rich heritage of the rural Woodland community. The City is dedicating more effort to developing local and regional partnerships and strategic alliances that allow resource sharing, better access to available resources, and access to entirely new resources. The keys to long-term quality and opportunity are balancing economic, social and cultural forces that, when properly blended, result in exceptional communities.

• While not purely an accomplishment of City government, the new High School that is opening in 2015 is great for the Woodland community. All parties associated with making this possible have earned the community’s sincere appreciation due to the arduous planning and development that is required of all new schools and the positive results will be enjoyed for many years. It is a true and lasting contribution to the generations to come!
**Desired Legacies for the City**

Current City officials, community leaders and department managers have taken time to consider their individual and collective vision(s) for Woodland and what legacy they would like to leave. There is a general consensus for what most see as a future characterized by vitality, collaboration, harmony, professionalism, and continuous progress. There is also a profound commitment to conservative values, prudent planning and careful execution that preserves resources and maintains the integrity of a traditional foundation built on the enduring concept of family neighborhoods. This is a community rich in history and proud of its rural heritage. Its vision reflects its history and its deep commitment to the preservation of those attributes that have made it a successful place to live and work.

*Overall, we envision a community that is safe, financially stable, well managed, effective, efficient, progressive, prudent, transparent and ethical.*

As the future unfolds, there is a commitment to the following conditions, attributes and legacies:

- Deeper, more integrated, communicative and collaborative relationships among the many professional communities that comprise Woodland – financial, education, health care, industry, commercial, residential, tourism, service clubs and government agencies. We see Woodland as a comprehensive, integrated city that comfortably blends all sectors into a community-based team dedicated to the ideals of heritage, harmony, open communication and consistent progress.

- A magnetic, highly active and vibrant business community that generates consistent, stable and sustainable economic growth in a manner that creates
greater community pride, citizen participation and preservation of Woodland’s quality of life.

- Well-planned, integrated and appropriate affordable housing that accommodates steady commercial and industrial growth while preserving Woodland’s close knit community and commitment to families and harmonious neighborhoods.

- A city workforce that embraces change and exhibits effective change management while taking reasonable risks through consistent creativity, networking, and collaboration with other communities, counties and state agencies. Over time, Woodland should be known for its commitment to progress and innovation; as a city that thinks big, transformative thoughts while avoiding reactive, Band Aid problem-solving approaches.

- A city that is well-managed, with professional and welcoming employees dedicated to public service. Citizens and members of the business and professional communities understand and are pleased with City services; City employees have a comfortable, serviceable workplace that allows them to conduct business and efficiently work with the public; employees have good training, clear direction, established objectives, sensible standards and have annual performance reviews that convey developmental areas as well as appreciation for their contribution to the community.

- Exceptional public management with annual planning, improvement plans, and clear, concise annual budgets that list major annual accomplishments along with long-term goals, annual measurable objectives, and initiatives for the coming fiscal year.

- As the City becomes more complex and larger, with more identified challenges, we envision the migration to professional executive management of day-to-day operations. With many converging external forces that will impact the City and its citizens, a higher level of executive management and planning will be essential to ensure stable budgets, services, management, and collaboration with community, county and state organizations.
- Greater educational opportunities for Woodland residents and a growing opportunity to attract new students and families to the community through such additions as an extension of the Clark College branch to Ridgefield. We envision the growth of educational opportunities for enterprising students and citizens desiring more education and expanded options for personal growth and life-long learning.

- More parks and public facilities that facilitate business and tourism growth while preserving the City’s rural heritage through recreational and open space set aside for all Woodland families.

- A city with improved transportation and pedestrian infrastructure, such as the Scott Avenue Reconnection and sidewalks from downtown to the Intermediate School; the potential to expand commerce at Belmont Loop with lower Green Mountain Road to develop into tiered affordable housing for a growing expanded commercial area.

- Higher levels of communitywide safety and security through regionalized fire/EMS services. Over time, the ongoing transition to regionalized RFA services will improve response times, provide a greater service range, increase community safety and boost the potential of attracting more businesses that need greater security to satisfy insurance requirements.
CITY OF WOODLAND MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

VISION

As the century unfolds, Woodland will experience continued population growth, more diversity, higher citizen expectations, and greater demand for essential public services at a time when resources are limited. Challenges will be met through the innovative use of technology, internal process improvement, creative programs, and careful planning. The City will seek new and broader strategic partnerships, invest more in economic development, and establish integrated services that ensure safe, balanced, wholesome, and harmonious neighborhoods.

OPERATING VALUES

As a city government, we believe in a highly efficient and dynamic work environment characterized by professionalism, integrity, honesty, and compassion. We are an ethical, hardworking, knowledgeable, and responsible team, committed to providing consistent, efficient, and community-oriented services. Above all, we are dedicated to sustaining the essential cornerstones of communication, collaboration, understanding and trust as the central foundation for our work with each other, our citizens, and our many private, public and voluntary partners.

Mission

Woodland city government provides leadership, vision, and long-term direction in a manner that promotes the community’s progressive spirit, economic vitality, efficiency, safety, and quality of life. City departments provide essential public services guided by the highest principles of customer service, fiscal accountability, and collaborative partnerships, reflecting their deep commitment to protecting the public trust while preserving the community’s rich heritage.
CITY PRIORITIES
2015-2020

Transportation and Utilities Planning: Increase the general efficiency and cost effectiveness of transportation and utility projects and services by improving analysis, planning, and scheduling.

Managing Growth and Development: Enrich the City’s quality of life through a balanced and sustainable approach to economic & community development.

Public Involvement: Increase the level of citizen, business, and stakeholder understanding to promote active involvement through improved data, better analysis, and collaborative problem solving.

Health, Safety, & Environmental Quality: Strengthen the City’s ability to increase citizen health, community safety and broad-based environmental protection.

Efficiency and Cost Control: Increase the general efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of human resources, programs, projects and services while controlling the cost of government.

Partnerships: Increase the level of internal and external cooperation and communication to build stronger, more harmonious relationships and partnerships that enhance the quality of City government.

Customer Service and Satisfaction: Increase public satisfaction and service through greater citizen knowledge, a broader resource base, rigorous program standards, and more efficient use of public information.

Employee Development: Maintain an efficient, highly capable workforce with the expertise and creativity necessary to meet existing and future challenges.
MAJOR CHALLENGE AREAS AND LONG-TERM GOALS
2015-2020

The City continues to grow, both in population and stature and, based on continued research, has the potential of becoming one of Washington’s premier small communities over the next few years. Continued accomplishment will require the identification of major challenges the City is facing and the development of prudent, visionary and cost-effective remedies. The following have been identified as major challenges that will factor into strategic planning over the next five or more years. Each Major Challenge Area is followed by associated Long-Term Goals presented in a generally measureable format that will allow the City to calculate progress over the next five years and beyond. If the City has already met an acceptable standard, the goal would be to maintain it over time.

- The city will most likely continue to face more federal and state unfunded mandates that require activities and services without associated funding. In such cases, the services or actions are required by law but funding must be generated locally. While the Association of Washington Cities is lobbying to minimize these, it is predicted that very few mandates from the federal and state level will be accompanied by funding, creating growing challenges in the budget process as well as in staffing.

  Long-Term Goals
  
  - To increase the amount of funding generated for programs and services from sources other than federal and state funds.
  - To maintain the highest possible federal and state funding levels over the next five+ years while other fund sources are explored.
  - To reduce the number of negative impacts created from long-term obligations associated when accepting federal and state funds.

- There is currently insufficient physical communitywide utility and transportation infrastructure to provide basic services, especially in areas where there is land that could attract industry. While water and sewer systems have adequate capacity for anticipated growth in some areas, the concern is for areas that do not yet have
systems in place. Extensions of utility and transportation infrastructure is needed to provide basic services to industrial and commercial lands that could be developed and provide economic growth to the City.

**Long-Term Goals**

- To increase the number of areas throughout the community with ample infrastructure to attract industry and facilitate neighborhood development.
- To increase the number of new and existing businesses and other organizations that invest in Woodland, citing ample and cost-effective infrastructure.

Similar to Cowlitz County, the City has significant health status issues, including high levels of obesity, diabetes, drug use, and smoking. Low health status increases health care costs for families, reduces vitality and limits the development of the type of vibrant, robust workforce that industry desires. A corollary challenge pertains to insufficient access to health care for lower income families and the elderly or physically impaired, which also detracts from the City’s ability to prosper and provide a superior quality of life.

**Long-Term Goals**

- To increase the number of affordable options and level of health care access for all citizens and especially for lower income families and the elderly or physically impaired.
- To increase the City’s overall health status relative to chronic disease
- To reduce the number of citizens with preventable health risk factors, such as obesity, smoking and drug use.

Lack of clear direction from the federal government on implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act could be an annual issue over the next five or more years as unanticipated new costs appear. City employee healthcare costs are rising faster than City revenues can support, making the current path unsustainable if the City is to properly fund required services and retain quality employees.
Long-Term Goals

- To reduce the impact of the Affordable Care Act on the City’s healthcare costs.
- To reduce or maintain at 2014 levels the healthcare costs for City employees.

➢ Reduced availability of funds from Federal and State grants. According to the CBO and various federal agencies, funding is declining and will continue to decline in the years ahead; it is also becoming more cumbersome to access, apply for, navigate, and report, often taking more time than the funds replace. State low interest rate loans for utility infrastructure is in danger of being eliminated as well.

Long-Term Goals

- To increase the number of non-federal revenue sources supporting City programs and services.
- To maintain, for at least five years, the amount of federal and state funding that supports City programs and services.

➢ Some of the City’s information technology is somewhat dated by contemporary standards, which, when coupled with lack of consistent skill training, has added to performance concerns related to productivity, efficiency and response times. Without efficient software and hardware, and current skillsets, City government will not have the ability to accommodate the growing number of service and information requests, transactions, programs, recordkeeping requirements, etc., and will be unable to fully meet the demands of a growing, more technical population.

Long-Term Goals

- To increase the City’s overall skill level and capability related to use of technology to provide efficient services.
- To increase City department efficiency and productivity through the use of information technology and automation.
City government facilities are old, inefficient and at times inappropriate to conduct community business. While the City must remain frugal with its expenditures, there is evidence from other communities that new facilities, such as a library, community recreation center, city hall, fire station, parks, etc. will often have a revitalizing impact on a city, leading to new business enterprises, more tourism, higher levels of entrepreneurial activity and a totally new level of sustainable economic vitality.

**Long-Term Goals**

- To increase the number of new or refurbished facilities that lead directly to increased productivity, higher quality, better response, and growing economic vitality.
- To increase the number of new or expanded enterprises that invest in response to refinements or investment in City-owned property.

Competition from nearby cities, such as Ridgefield and La Center, which have aggressively annexed property close to the freeway for industrial development, creates steep competition for Woodland in seeking new industry and tourism, and in retaining a talented workforce. Ridgefield recently added water resources designed to support growth, is beginning a 75 acre medical complex and is already experiencing considerable residential and industrial growth. In addition, it has ample land to continue growing. La Center expects growth and is working with the planned 150 plus acre Indian development. Kalama has just annexed 200 acres for expansion of its deep water port and has attracted development projected to bring as many as 1,000 employees to the area, so expects residential growth and economic development as a byproduct.

**Long-Term Goals**

- To increase Woodland’s competitive spirit and number of innovative economic development activities that will utilize its many attributes to build a robust, sustainable economy.
- To increase the level of collaboration in area-wide economic development activities that will strengthen the economic activity and economies in all adjacent cities.
➢ As a corollary to the above statement, Woodland has no comprehensive, fully collaborative economic development plan that integrates community development and ties in key elements of the community. Even though conservative and steeped in its commitment to heritage, the City is without the one central element necessary for overarching, if carefully paced, economic development. Rather than various disconnected efforts (some quite good), there must be a more holistic effort that combines the best long-view thinkers with business leaders, fiscal resources and other advocates for change.

**Long-Term Goal**

- To increase the level of economic development planning to include creation of a collaborative plan that encompasses all the work of all agencies dedicated to overall community growth and development.

➢ Lack of port facilities reduces options for attracting industry, while many area cities with significant frontage on a major river actively seek to develop a deep water port. There has been insufficient support, vision and collaborative strategic planning to develop this potent asset. This puts Woodland at a significant disadvantage when trying to attract industries that depend on importing and exporting products around the world.

**Long-Term Goal**

- To increase the level of active collaboration and number of specific activities dedicated to attracting business and industry to Port of Woodland services.

➢ Traffic congestion in certain sections of the City is detrimental to business and community life. For instance, the east-west on-ramp onto I-5 at Exit 21 is overburdened, especially during rush hour, increasing potential for accidents, limiting customer flow for area businesses, and reducing the viability of that section of the City.

**Long-Term Goals**

- To reduce the overall traffic congestion levels
- To reduce the impact of the I-5 Exit 21 east-west on ramp during peak times and further reduce the impact of traffic congestion to citizens and the business community.
As part of the above, the difficulty or inability to obtain state/federal funding for major transportation improvements in the City will over time reduce the City’s vitality and ability to attract business, tourists and residents.

**Long-Term Goals**

- To increase, for at least five years, the amount of federal and state funding received for major transportation improvement before it is drastically reduced.
- To increase the number of projects completed and funded during this period and afterwards using federal and state funding.

There is insufficient integrated emergency preparedness throughout the City and its various communities, opening many areas to serious loss of life and property should a major event occur. A high level of preparation would include intact plans for flood, violent weather events, massive accidents, earthquakes, major fires, and other catastrophic events that would impact many citizens and consume enormous resources.

**Long-Term Goal**

- To increase the level of Woodland’s collaborative emergency preparedness that results in a comprehensive plan that can mitigate the impact of any catastrophic and sub-catastrophic event.

There is insufficient open space and property to expand residential and commercial development, which hampers economic development and community growth options. While this may be dependent on geography, topography and boundaries, it hampers long-range planning and requires highly innovative and costly solutions at a time when funding is tight.

**Long-Term Goal**

- To increase the number of innovative land use plans and community growth options that effectively use available land and the current geographic configuration.
Flood insurance is inappropriately high, limiting economic and community development.

**Long-Term Goal**
- To reduce the overall number of households and businesses with inappropriate flood insurance costs.
- To reduce the number of economic barriers directly attributable to high flood and other types of high-priced property insurance.

New business enterprises, such as Cowlitz Casino will create demands for affordable housing, add to traffic, impact the school system, and could increase the need for additional public safety, which will add cost to an already stressed budget. The City must balance efforts to attract new business and boost its economy with prudent policies, while building strong relationships, negotiating concessions, and establishing partnering MOUs and other agreements that help balance new growth with public funding.

**Long-Term Goals**
- To reduce the impacts of new business enterprises while increasing their positive influence on the overall Woodland community.
- To increase the number of partnerships between the City and among various enterprises that generate more balance among existing businesses, new enterprises, community institutions and Woodland’s many neighborhoods.

State has been unwilling to address collective bargaining reform. Similar to all other Washington cities, costs for pensions, medical insurance, and salaries continue to rise, which must trigger a need for greater equity in the binding interest arbitration statues if this and other communities are to balance revenue realities with appropriate compensation.

**Long-Term Goals**
- To reduce the overall level and percentage gains pertaining to employee costs associated with compensation, benefits and retirement programs.
• To maintain employee compensation and benefits at a level that allows recruitment and retention of employee talent but does not erode the City’s ability to effectively operate in a balanced prudent manner.

➤ National, regional and local economies are recovering, but very slowly, making it difficult to generate significant growth or investment in ‘magnetic’ characteristics that attract private and commercial residents.

**Long-Term Goals**

• To increase the level of understanding about the Woodland communities magnetic characteristics that make it an ideal place for families, recreation, business or retirement.
• To increase the level of investment coming into the community over the next five years.

➤ As a small rural bedroom community, Woodland has insufficient community and citizen involvement and a certain level of disconnection in various critical deliberations and plans that does not allow the City to utilize the talent, experience and insight of its residents. Citizens are not involved and many local businesses and property owners feel they are not listened to and will not get involved.

**Long-Term Goals**

• To increase the level and depth of community engagement in all City affairs.
• To reduce the number of citizen complaints and concerns expressed due to insufficient knowledge or participation.
• To reduce the level of concern expressed by area business owners that the City is non-communicative and disinterested in their plans, ideas and concerns.
The following strategic initiatives are major strategies/ actions planned to address Major Challenge Areas and achieve Long-term Goals. As with all significant activities, they encompass a range of sub-actions and strategies, many of which will be found in individual and more detailed Department plans. The City has categorized initiatives into six topical areas to provide a more solid planning foundation and to enable separate implementation plans to be developed and budgeted. Once approved by the budget process, they will be undertaken. Above all, initiatives must be analyzed relative to their magnitude and positive/ negative impact on the community then prioritized prior to budget discussions.

Woodland does not have sufficient funds to simultaneously undertake and accomplish all of the described initiatives. However, it is critical that they are identified and included in the annual strategic plan to acknowledge their importance to the community and that they have been recognized as important by the Mayor, Council, departments and community.

**Economic Development**

- The Port of Woodland has developed an accelerated plan for advancing the area’s ability to attract new business. Among the most visible projects are:
  1. Rose Growers Industrial Park on Guild Road, a 15 acre development with master site plan and development to begin 2015 and projected to be complete in 2017.
  2. Boat launch, park, trail, restrooms at Martin Bar Lion’s Day park are underway and will be completed by 2018, permitting through construction.
  3. Complete master planning will be completed for 25 acres on Schurman Way and Taggard Property on Guild Road between 2015 and 2017.
  4. A Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements plan will be fully developed and presented in 2015.
The City will increase its support for economic development projects and efforts by such organizations as the Woodland Economic Development Group and Woodland Quality Community Coalition and participate in various economic development activities with the County, Chamber of Commerce, local service clubs, business and voluntary agency leaders, public organizations, etc. to create more unified and energized economy.

Due to the correlation between industrial infrastructure and growth in undeveloped areas, the City will accelerate efforts to increase infrastructure necessary to attract commercial enterprises. The City will increase the level of collaboration with local and regional businesses that demonstrate interest in locating in the Woodland area and may be willing stakeholders in industrial development.

The City will continue to lead efforts to develop a single economic development master plan that is aligned with the City’s Comprehensive Plan, its long-term goals and its key priorities. The anticipated output will be one overarching economic development action plan that can guide growth and promote innovative strategies throughout the City.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Due to the disparity between required surface (street) infrastructure maintenance and adequate funding, the City will formulate a long-term plan to protect its transportation infrastructure and maintain a system that creates safe and economically viable neighborhoods and commercial areas. The Public Works Department will conduct studies of similar communities that have faced similar challenges but have overcome them through innovative solutions. This study will be completed by the end of 2015 and will detail options to provide adequate overlays, chip seals, crack sealing and other City transportation system needs.

The City will complete its Comprehensive Plan Update on schedule in 2016 in conjunction with Clark County’s Comprehensive Plan Update. In addition it will complete the Parks and Recreation Plan in 2015 and insert that content in the Capital Facilities Plan for Comprehensive Plan.

Complying with Washington state requirements, the City will complete a General Sewer Plan Update in order to receive approval and proper credentialing from the state Department of Ecology in 2015.
Over the next five years, the City will undertake several major infrastructure improvements, some of which are already scheduled, such as: Undertake a major street improvement design that would relocate CC Street Bridge traffic onto A and Millard and relocate SR 503 and CC Street traffic signal east 1 block to SR 503 and Millard; scheduled for completion 2020; complete recommended electrical improvements at water treatment plant by 2017; and complete relining of all concrete sewer mains by 2019.

The City anticipates receiving NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) approval from the Washington State Department of Transportation for the Scott Avenue Reconnection Project in 2015 and completing construction of SR 503/Scott Avenue Intersection roundabout and associated improvements by the end of 2015.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

To address aging and inefficient City facilities, the City will undertake a broad-based analysis to determine how newer, more efficient facilities could positively impact City efficiency, accessibility, effectiveness, service quality and overall economic vitality. To date, early evidence demonstrates that new facilities, such as a library, community recreation center, city hall, fire station, parks, etc. will often have a revitalizing impact on a city, leading to new business enterprises, more tourism, higher levels of entrepreneurial activity and a totally new level of sustainable economic vitality.

As part of the initiative noted above, the City will develop a long-term Capital Facilities Master Plan that will be used to guide long-range planning for facility renovation, replacement and new construction.

Build a new fire station on site at E. Scott Avenue as part of the anticipated new Regional Fire Authority (2015) and complete the new facility by 2016.

Complete development and build-out of the Scott Hill Park and Sports Complex. This will open new avenues to promote regional tourism and sporting events that will generate additional revenue for City businesses. It also allows Woodland to showcase its amenities and why it is a great place to live and build a business.
CITY OPERATIONS

- Demand for City services continues to increase as the area’s population grows and diversity becomes more acute. To meet demand and ensure efficient, effective and high quality operations, the City will undertake annual departmental assessments to review systems, processes, procedures, and staff capability. Focus will be on planned continuous improvement based on specific program and skill requirements and will be initially derived from departmental strategic planning conducted in 2014. Beginning in 2015, each department will annually review internal issues and challenges and produce an improvement plan emphasizing efficiency, quality, productivity and cost effectiveness.

- Due to the predicted decline in federal and state funding and financial assistance, the City will begin researching alternative funding sources and developing a general plan to increase the number of funding options. Based on Congressional Budget Office reports, the overall level of support to states and municipalities will decline over the next 10 years and funding for highly localized projects may require local financing, thereby directly affecting taxation or requiring special bonds to produce adequate funding. Woodland intends to get ahead of this situation.

PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY

- With a new public safety building, a 5-year strategic plan and new Police Chief, the City is positioned to strengthen its overall public safety programs and services. Over the next two years, the Police Department will upgrade its recordkeeping and record retrieval systems, analyze data collection gaps, and formulate a new plan to refine its process of resource allocation and deployment. The driving purpose behind this multifaceted initiative is to reduce preventable crime while increasing overall public safety, security and quality of community life.

- Aggressively pursue adoption of a new Regional Fire Authority in 2015 and complete analysis/planning for that will lead to a new fire station in Woodland by 2016. This will further reduce response times, increase public safety, decrease insurance issues for some businesses and residents, and add another layer to the City’s already high level of quality of life.

- Community policing and crime prevention programs will be expanded to ensure a more community-centric Police Department and to address concerns about escalating crime. Above all, the Police Department will seek greater community involvement and more joint analysis and planning to promote collaboration, cooperation and good will.
• As with other areas of City management, the Police Department will develop broader internal protocols and programs, along with external collaboration to increase measured performance and consistent accountability. Along with other City departments, there will be a greater emphasis on employee development, performance planning, operating efficiency, transparency, and recordkeeping.

• While not a major challenge area (MCA) the identified during annual planning, public safety personnel will take the lead to develop an Emergency Disaster Plan for all departments and other public agencies. While Woodland is not anticipating a serious event, every community must have an action/response plan, which will be drafted by 2016.

• Joining with other City Departments, the Police Department will institute a formal Professional Development program to ensure continuous performance improvement and acquisition of knowledge and skills required of all officers and non-sworn employees. An initial employee development program will be created by the end of 2015 and will emphasize cost-effective internal training events provided by Department instructors or by senior officers and command personnel from larger area agencies.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
• Coordinate efforts among key organizations such as the Building and Planning department, Planning Commission to complete the city’s comprehensive plan by 2016. As part of this process, the City will increase its involvement in analysis and planning targeting broader social, cultural and economic development activities. The City will collaborate with its many partners to building a more comprehensive plan for long-term development that will strengthen Woodland neighborhoods, encourage greater citizen involvement and create a community that is magnetic, cohesive and enduring.