

City of Mount Dora

STATE OF THE CITY 2014-2015

Our Pathway To Success



CITY OF
MOUNT
DORA

A Letter from our Mayor...

Greetings,

*It is my honor and pleasure to address the citizens, community organizations and businesses of Mount Dora with the mayor's annual State of the City, focusing on our **'pathway to success.'***

We are continuing to work through one of the most challenging times in our nation's history. Last year marked the City of Mount Dora's 104th anniversary of incorporation. As we begin the 105th year of our incorporation, we must continue to honor the intentions of the City's founders as we work together to create a legacy for future generations of Mount Dora residents. Adjustments and transitions are necessary during periods of turmoil, and the City's government has modified its business plans, expenditures and investments accordingly. The City continues to plan for and invest in the future, even during times of economic challenges.

Our duty as a City Council is to be responsible stewards with the resources and services available to current residents, while planning for future residents. Our business community saw several new businesses launched and expanded in the past year. Our community service organizations continue to address the needs within the local community that government can no longer afford to provide. We are fortunate to have business and civic groups actively involved in a variety of areas including, organizing large-scale festivals and events, decorating our City for the holiday season and promoting our town on a continual basis. These collaborative efforts support the overall goal of drawing visitors to our vibrant, destination City.

We have revised this year's State of the City report to reflect the functions and tasks of the City, and to highlight the quality of services we provide to our citizens.

*The seven goals outlined in this report summarize our accomplishments over the past year, while providing a glimpse into the City's future projects. We look forward to continuing our **'pathway to success.'***

Catherine Heckel



PROVIDE EXCELLENT SERVICES

Mount Dora is a full-service City organized around nine major departments with a \$45 million budget and 206 employees. We're progressive in our approach to maximize efficiency and effectiveness for the most responsible cost.



In 2015, the City will upgrade its computer software to better manage financial data. The City continues to improve services at a millage level less than it was ten years ago. We will continue performing value assessments of major departmental functions to maintain relevance and service performance for our citizens.



Budget Brief

In the last several budgets, expenditure trends for public safety, transportation, general government, and culture and recreation have shown steady increases, indicating the City's on-going commitment to providing a safe and friendly environment to its citizens.

PROMOTE COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY

Mount Dora continues to promote regional transportation and trail connectivity to projects like the Lake Wekiva Trail, Tremain Street Greenway and Lincoln Avenue Trail. The city continues to prepare for the Wekiva Parkway construction and interchange widening at US 441, State Road 44B and State Road 46 in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).



Aside from physical connectivity, Mount Dora continues to promote cultural connectivity through the expansion of special events and support of acclaimed festivals through out improved venues at our downtown parks and the **Mount Dora Theater at the Community Building**.



Budget Brief

Major connectivity projects were completed in 2014, including the Tremain Street Greenway and the Lincoln Avenue Trail. A \$600,000 FDOT grant helped to fund the Greenway project, while a \$489,000 FDOT grant helped to fund the Lincoln Avenue Trail project.

SUPPORT VALUE-ADDED ECONOMY

We maintain high development standards as we remain current to market needs, and we plan ahead to provide the supporting infrastructure and quality of community to be attractive for prospective businesses and residents.



Examples include: marketing the Wolf Branch Innovation District to stimulate future economic opportunity; expanding our economic development initiatives and organization; facilitating the development of Epic Theaters; and planning for additional road connections and utilities to serve the potential growth to our eastern service area. Our goal is to continue supporting our economy, without diminishing the importance of our community’s natural resources and character.



**Budget
Brief**

Fiscal Year 2013

<i>Number of new residential permits.....</i>	<i>83</i>
<i>Value of new residential permits.....</i>	<i>\$18,689,072</i>
<i>Number of new commercial permits.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Value of new commercial permits.....</i>	<i>\$2,794,000</i>

INVEST IN CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The City of Mount Dora has maintained its commitment to capital needs that service our citizens through our Capital Improvement Project (CIP) budget of over \$10 million per year, even during the Recession. We recognize that such investment is key to building economic development.



Recent capital projects include: the relocation of our utility lines to ensure completion of state roadway projects; completing our site plan for the Thrill Hill reservoir to service reclaim water needs in the future; enhancing operations to increase our wastewater treatment plant capacity without building more expensive facilities; constructing an innovative design for our Bio-Solids Facility to reduce costs of sludge handling; extending water lines down Britt Road to provide enhanced reliability and capacity; and replacing our operational and capital equipment and facilities to maintain their service reliability.



Budget Brief

Utility projects provide basic services that are critical to the health and welfare of our citizens. The five year utility projects in the City's CIP have a projected total cost of \$26.3 million, of which \$6.6 million is for the fiscal year 2014-15

ENHANCE SAFETY AND LIVABILITY

Maintaining a safe environment for our citizens is a top priority as we work hard at ensuring the highest standard of professionalism in public safety and other employees; and we strive to assist our customers in all operational areas to meet their needs.



Examples are our continual evaluation of technology and specialized equipment, such as body cameras for the Police or installing Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in our facilities and patrol cars; being the first Florida city to host the traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian Institution entitled “The Way We Worked” at our newly expanded library; connecting with our school children through expansion of the School Resource Officer Program to the middle school this year; and improving our ISO rating for Fire services to aid residents in their homeowners insurance costs.



Budget Brief

Fiscal Year 2013

<i>Number of emergency calls.....</i>	<i>4,373</i>
<i>Number of EMS and rescue calls dispatched.....</i>	<i>2,442</i>
<i>Number of confirmed fires suppressed by Fire personnel.....</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Number of Library Visits.....</i>	<i>251,080</i>

GROW A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

We support the expansion of special events to bring more activities to the downtown core, while maintaining an attractive lakefront park and trail system to enhance the downtown experience with a beautiful environment to complement commerce and activity.



Examples include our continuation of the Downtown Streetscape and Utility Project along portions of Fourth Avenue and Donnelly Street; expanding our downtown merchant promotion campaigns and incentive grants for businesses; providing support for festivals and special events as we expand venues and attract more entertainment for our community's enjoyment; and investing in the upgrades for docks, boardwalks and other amenities along our beautiful lakefront.



Budget Brief

In 2014, the City invested \$170,000 to the CRA Commercial Property Improvement Incentive Grant program, allowing 34 businesses to make interior and facade upgrades during summer construction. These financial investments help to ensure the downtown remains vibrant, while maintaining its quaint, historic charm.

ENGAGE OUR CITIZENS

The City continues to engage citizens, non-profits, churches and other agencies as partners in improving our community. We support collaborative efforts across diverse interests to properly examine issues and reach consensus opinions for the good of our community.



Examples include: our continued follow-up from the 2011 Envision Mount Dora project to improve our land use regulations and plan for future development; maintaining a strong relationship with our boards and committees to receive valued input from citizen servants; expanding our web and social media access to incorporate more community input, working cooperatively with our neighboring jurisdictions to enhance public services; and ensuring professional compliance with all regulations intended to improve the governance process - from public records to water conservation.



Budget Brief

<i>Fiscal Year 2013</i>	
<i>Recreational programs</i>	26
<i>Program attendance</i>	14,787
<i>Number of park acres maintained</i>	275.48

Recent Community Awards

“The 20 Best Small Towns to Visit in 2014”
– *Smithsonian Institution*

“Friendliest Small Town in Florida”
– *Florida Monthly*

“Best Antique Shopping in the South”
– *Southern Living*

“Top 100 Towns”
– *Great Towns of America Travel and Relocation*

“Great Places in Florida: People’s Choice Award 2014”
– *American Planning Association of Florida*

“Under-the-Radar Places to Visit in Florida 2014”
– *Huffington Post*

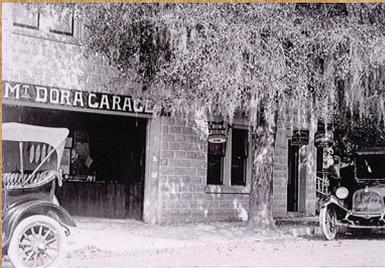
“8 Great Small Towns 2014”
– *Where to Retire Magazine*

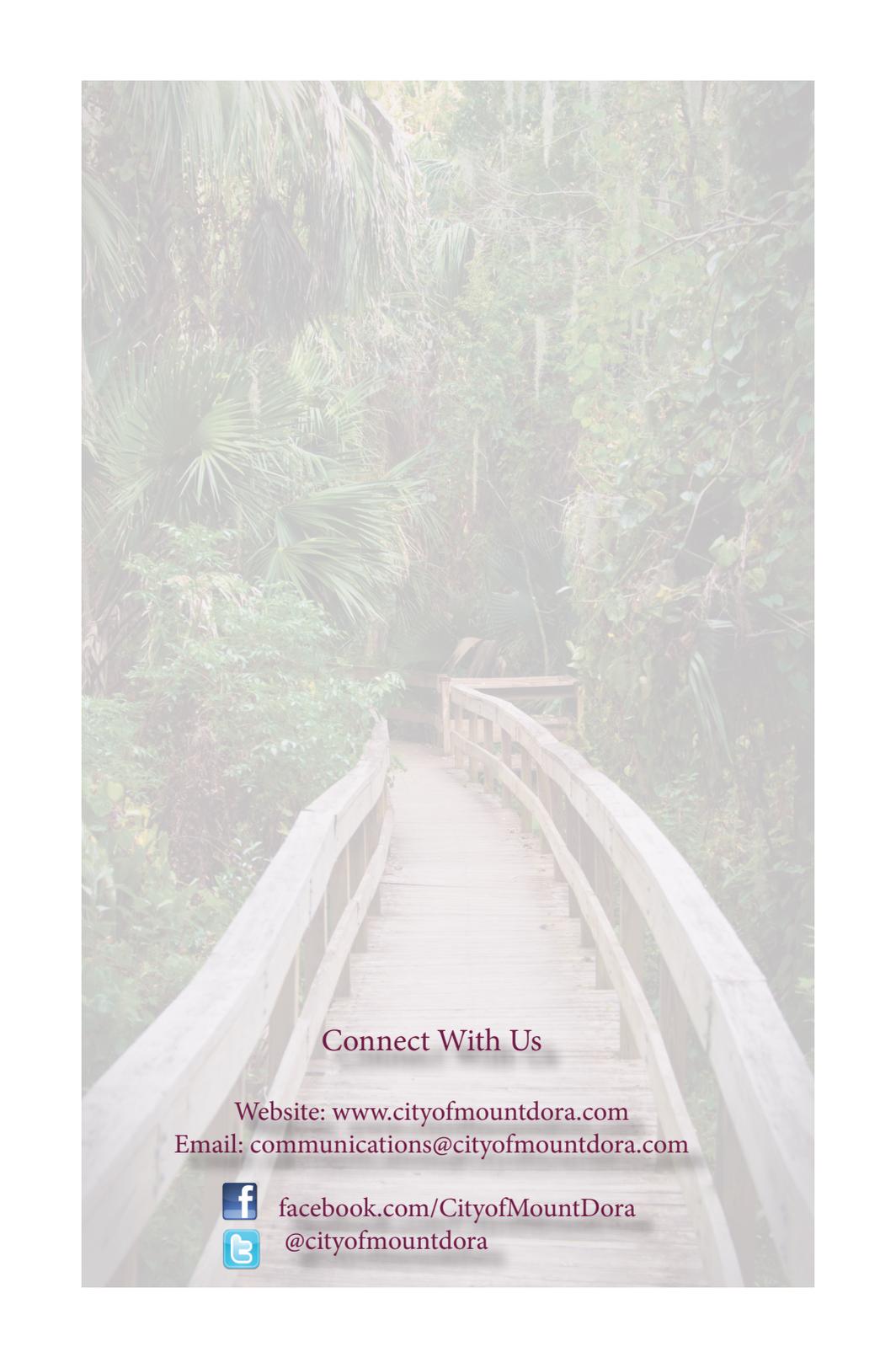


Historic Mount Dora

Our
Vision

Preserve the quality and unique character of Mount Dora, while providing outstanding municipal services to our citizens.





Connect With Us

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