

An Exciting Year Ahead

Happy New Year! As we enter the new year, I believe that the City of Prescott will have a dynamic and productive year ahead. This is thanks in part to the passage of Proposition 478 last November, which has set our public safety agencies up for long term success, and will lead to improved response times for emergency calls. We can now move forward this year to plan for these new facilities, equipment and staffing.

Additionally, in December, Council set forth three key goals for the coming years including building two new fire stations, addressing workforce housing, and bringing new businesses to Prescott through economic development efforts. Achieving these goals will help make Prescott more economically resilient, more accessible for working families, and safer for all citizens.

Public Safety

As we discussed, funds from the .95% sales tax increase, set to go into effect April 1, 2025, will help fund the capital costs of the fire stations, as well as the equipment and staff needed to operate them. Locations will be identified, and plans will be drafted in the first quarter of this year. We plan to begin construction later this year, and our plan is to have both stations open and fully staffed by late 2029. We will also plan for police facilities such as substations and a new evidence storage facility. In addition, we will begin to recruit police officers and firefighters to bolster our current staff levels, and ramp up for the new facilities.

We are committed to using the funds from this new sales tax only for public safety improvements. Citizens will be able to monitor City spending through the OpenGov online platform, set to launch soon.

Workforce Housing

As you may know, the City has established a Workforce Housing Committee to understand the needs in our community for attainable housing for our workforce. In 2025, with funds from a State grant, we will conduct a housing needs assessment to better understand the gaps that are keeping housing out of reach for so many. We know that housing affordability is a challenge not just in Prescott but around the nation. We hope to employ best practices to encourage development of housing that is attainable. The information gathered from the study will help guide our future actions, and will inform the community of the need for attainable housing.

Business Attraction

Because of the way the City's General Fund relies primarily on sales tax, it is imperative that we continue to recruit retailers, restaurants and other service businesses to grow our tax base. Additionally, we have identified the need for more businesses that provide professional career opportunities. Certain Industries have been identified as vital for our healthy current and future economic growth. These include healthcare, aviation, cybersecurity and high technology. Industries like manufacturing, and skilled trades are also vital and much needed in our area.

State of the City

This year, I will be creating a State of the City video, where I will update the community on some of these issues, as well as provide a City financial update, a development update, and other important facts and figures. The video will air for the first time at the Prescott Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting on Thursday, January 16 at 8 am at the Elks Theatre, then will be available on the City website and social media channels. For more information about the annual meeting go to Prescott.org or contact the Chamber at 928-445-2000.