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Profile of the City of Grants Pass

Overview

Grants Pass is located in the "Sun Belt" of Southern Oregon astride the banks of the Rogue River, one of America's premier white water rivers. Nestled among a series of mountains giving the valley a scenic backdrop, Grants Pass is situated in Southwestern Oregon on the Interstate 5. With a current estimated population of 36,398, it is the county seat of Josephine County and serves as the major commercial center for the county population of more than 82,713.

Grants Pass and its surrounding valleys have a colorful past forged by Native Americans, trappers, loggers, gold panners, celebrities, and writers who were attracted to the river and who contributed to its legends. The first inhabitants of the region were the Takilma and Shasta tribes, frequently referred to by Hudson Bay trappers as "The Rogues" because of their willingness to fight for their rights. Josephine County was named for Josephine Rollins Ort, who came to the Illinois Valley with her father in 1851 and was credited with the first discovery of gold in Southern Oregon. The promise of gold caused Grants Pass, named to honor General Ulysses S. Grant's success at Vicksburg, to grow quickly. Farming began in order to meet the miner's needs. Besides gold, timber was a major product of the county. From cigars and bricks, to pine needles, industry in Grants Pass started to boom. Well established by the 1900's, the commercial salmon fleets added one more reason to draw people to the area. Recreational salmon fishing still draws people to the community.

The community is very volunteer oriented. Public and private enterprise working in unison with citizens completed a ten-year project of building a 50-acre community park "for all ages." Reinhart Volunteer Park boasts baseball diamonds, soccer fields, horseshoes pits, basketball and tennis courts, passive trails, viewing ponds, playgrounds, and picnic and shelter areas created through thousands of volunteer hours and donated services. This volunteer spirit continued with the 8.37 acre Morrison Centennial Park. This park, dedicated in February 2005, was created by volunteers on donated land. Volunteers continue to work on both new and older projects such as Redwood Park and on adding adjacent property to Reinhart Volunteer Park. These projects, along with many others too numerous to list, exemplify the pride of the local citizens.

Rogue Community College is a two year accredited public community college and provides excellent educational opportunities to all in the community. It boasts a population of more than 10,000 full and part-time students. The college caters not only to transfer programs but also offers technical and vocational programs, adult basic education, and recreational learning. Southern Oregon University, one of nine state university campuses, is located just 40 miles south of Grants Pass in Ashland. School District #7, serving students within the city limits, provides education to 5,853 students at ten school sites made up of six elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and one alternative school. There are also over 10 private and parochial schools in Josephine County.

The Rogue River provides many recreational opportunities such as: jet-boat trips, rafting, kayaking, fishing, water skiing, swimming, hiking, and gold panning. Nearby mountains provide high-mountain recreation, including snow skiing at Mt. Ashland. Other scenic attractions include Crater Lake National Park, Oregon Caves National Monument, and the Redwoods that stretch from San Francisco to Southern Oregon. Cultural activities include the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland and the historic town of Jacksonville.

Economy

Once a timber based community, manufacturing, tourism, recreation, and service industries now provide the major sources of employment. Josephine County's reliance on logging and timber products manufacturing has decreased over the past three decades. The county's industrial base has diversified to include technology, medical care, tourism, retirement services, manufacturing, retail trade and other service sectors; the wood products industry still maintains a small presence in county. A state economist has determined Josephine County to rank highest among non-metro Oregon counties in terms of economic diversification.

The City of Grants Pass has recovered from the recession and new businesses are bringing vibrancy to the downtown corridor and surrounding areas. There is an entrepreneur spirit with fresh ideas and local made products. New restaurants and a new hotel are in the process of being built. There were 1,161 building permits issued between January-December of 2015 and already the City has issued 716 permits for the first quarter of 2016. Grants Pass Tourism Tax Revenue was up 16.2% from last year and exceeded the State average.

Employment growth continues with the unemployment rate staying at historical low level. The government sector is still an important employer in the region, offering a wide variety of jobs.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Feb. 2016 was 6.0% slightly lower than last year's rate of 7.4%. This rate is still slightly higher than state average.

Josephine County employment increased by 730 jobs or 3.0 percent during the 12 months ending in February 2016. Oregon's employment increased by 3.3 percent. The most significant gains occurred in retail trade, private educational and health services and in manufacturing. Employment declined slightly in wholesale trade and in local government education.

Profile of the City of Grants Pass

Details at a Glance

Location:

Southern Oregon off of I-5, Exit No. 55 & No. 58, 68 miles south of Roseburg and 6 miles north of Rogue River, 240 miles south of Portland and 407 miles north of San Francisco.

Date of Incorporation: 1887

Climate (2014):

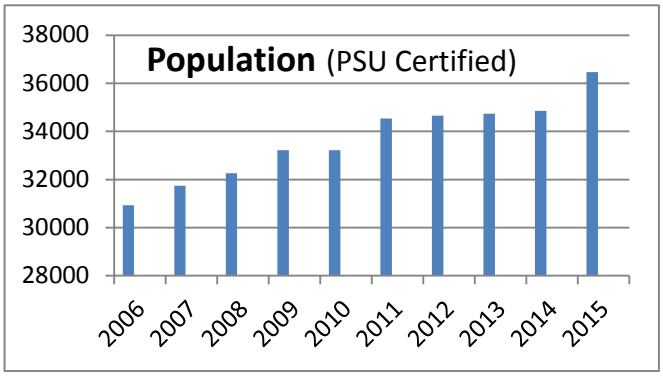
Average Temperature:	High	Low
July	93°	61°
January	48°	34°

Annual Precipitation	26.9

Elevation: 960’

Population:

Year	Amount	% Increase
2015	36,465	4.62
2014	34,855	.3
2013	34,740	.2
2012	34,660	.4
2011	34,533	3.9
2010	33,225	0
2000	23,170	32.4
1990	17,503	16.5
1980	15,032	20.7
1970	12,455	23.1
1960	10,118	



Taxes (2014):

Sales tax	None
Consolidated property tax rate per $1,000 assessed value	$12.56

Education (March 31, 2015):

Grants Pass School District #7

Attendance centers	10
Total enrollment	5,853

Elections (November 2014):

Registered voters	12,068
Ballots cast	8,004
Percentage voted	66.32%

Fire Protection:

Stations	3
Employees	30
Interns	9

Police Protection:

Employees (sworn)	50
Volunteers (auxiliary)	16
Volunteer hours	2,835

Recreation and Culture:

Parks	24
Green spaces/trails	9
Museums	2
Swimming pool	1

Assessed Property Value:

In thousands of dollars

2015	$2,901,486
2014	$2,720,899
2013	$2,624,937
2012	$2,560,620
2011	$2,508,736
2010	$2,409,615
2009	$2,318,500
2008	$2,207,029
2007	$2,065,308
2006	$1,728,992

Details at a Glance

2010 Census Information Zip Code 97526

Age Composition*:

Under 5 years	1,786	(5.2%)
5 to 19 years	6,393	(18.7%)
20 to 44 years	8,665	(25.3%)
45 to 64 years	10,061	(29.4%)
65+ years	7,300	(21.3%)

*Based on population of 34,205 - Census 2010 Demographic Profiles

Median Age:

2010	45.6
2000	38
1990	37
1980	32
1970	36
1960	34

2010 Housing Occupancy:

Total housing units:	15,422
Occupied units	14,178
Rental vacancy rate	6.6%

Housing Units:

Year	Amount	% Increase
2010	15,561	57
2000	9,885	32
1990	7,480	22
1980	6,117	36
1970	4,491	

2010 Housing Tenure:

Occupied housing units:	14,178
Owner occupied	8,931
Renter occupied	5,247

Income in 2010:

Median Household Income	$34,652

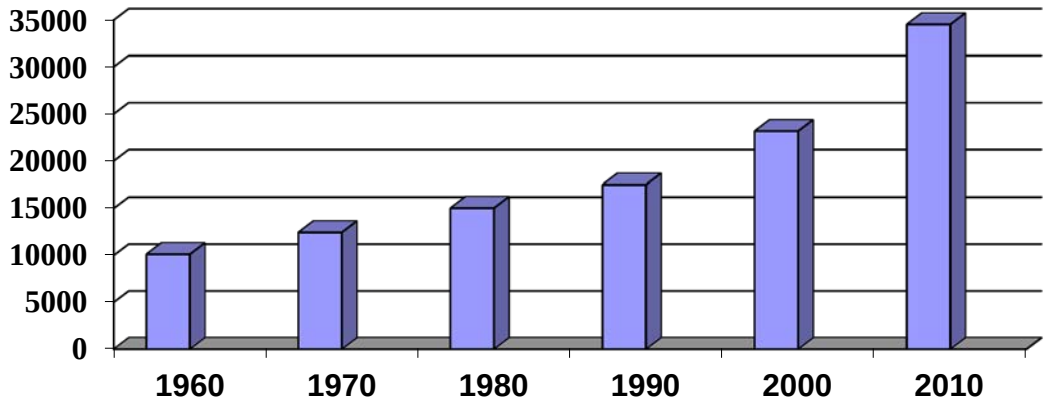
Mortgage:

Median Monthly Owner Costs	$1,478

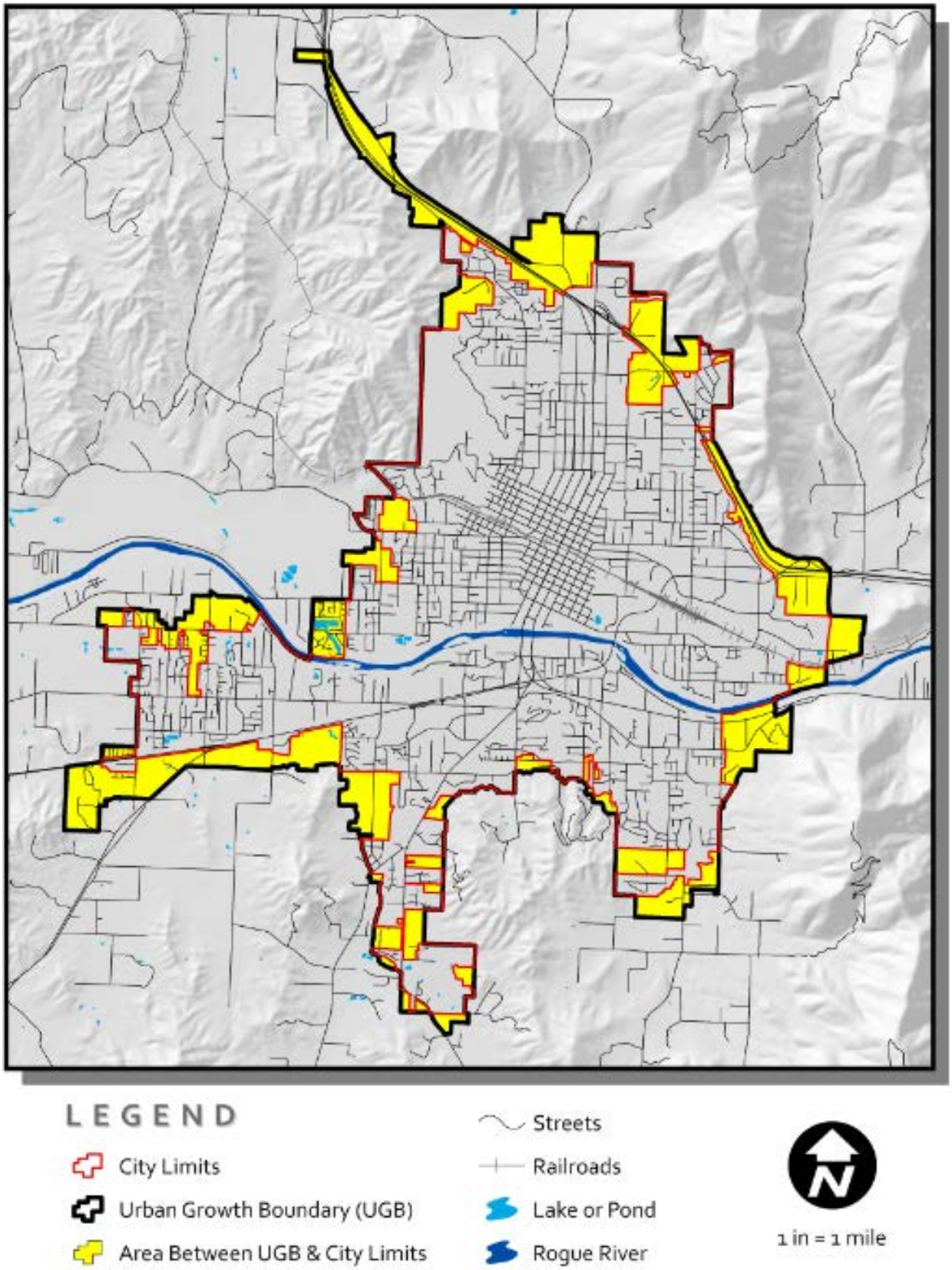
Gross Rent:

Median Gross Rent	$775

Census Population Growth



Map of the City of Grants Pass and the Urban Growth Boundary Area



City Government

The City of Grants Pass, incorporated in 1887, is a home rule charter city. This charter is the basic law under which the City operates. Amendments to the charter can only be made by a vote of the people and can be placed on the ballot by the Council or by the voters through an initiative process.

Ordinances enacted by the City Council also govern the city. The Council can change an ordinance at any time or the voters of Grants Pass can initiate an ordinance change. City ordinances become effective 30 days after they are passed by the Council and approved by the Mayor. Emergency measures needed for the health, peace and safety of the city are effective immediately following a favorable vote by two thirds of the Council.

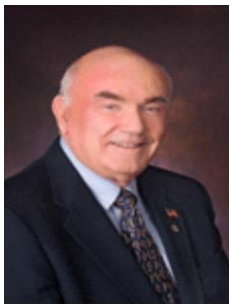
The Mayor is the formal representative of the City of Grants Pass and is elected to a four-year term by the voters at large on a non-partisan ballot. The Mayor presides over Council meetings and does not vote, except in the case of a tie. The Mayor can veto any Council decision, but a two-thirds vote of the Council can override the veto.

The City Council is composed of eight councilors elected to four-year terms on a non-partisan ballot. One councilor is elected from each of the eight wards in the city, with one-half of the Council elected every two years. New wards may be created or the boundaries of wards may be changed by Council action. The Council's authority extends over all the City's powers and sets the policies by which the City serves its citizens. The Council takes official action at regular Council meetings, which are open to the public. The Mayor may call a special meeting, provided that the public is given 24-hour notice.

Since Grants Pass operates under the council-manager form of government, the Council is responsible for selecting a City Manager. The City Manager is responsible for the business, financial, and property transactions of the City, as well as preparation of the annual budget, appointment and supervision of personnel, enforcement of City ordinances, and the organization and general management of City departments. As chief administrator, the City Manager has no vote in the Council, but may take part in discussions of matters coming before the legislative body.

Mayor & Council

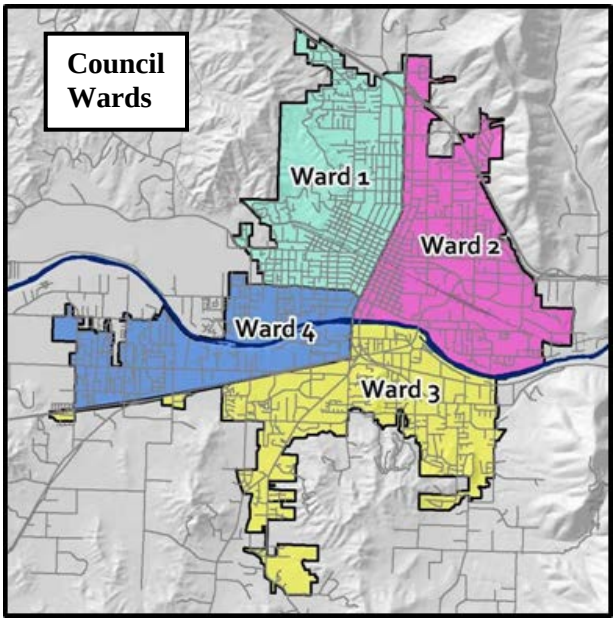
Roy Lindsay
Term 1/5/15-12/31/18
WARD 1



Darin Fowler
Term 1/1/13-12/31/16
MAYOR

Dan DeYoung
Term 4/7/10-12/31/16
WARD 1

VACANT
Term 2/25/13-12/31/18
WARD 4



Valerie Lovelace
Term 1/4/16-12/31/16
WARD 2

VACANT
Term 1/4/16-12/31/16
WARD 4

Rick Riker
Term 1/3/11-12/31/18
WARD 2

Dennis Roler
Term 1/5/15-12/31/18
WARD 3

Ken Hannum
Term 1/7/13-12/31/16
WARD 3

Citizen Involvement

The citizens of Grants Pass are the most important part of the City organization. Councilors are elected by the citizens to represent their interests on the Council, and City services are directed to meet their needs. Public hearings are routinely held so that citizens can contribute to the planning and budgeting process of the City.

Another way for citizens to have input in how the City is governed is through the City's advisory groups. The City of Grants Pass uses two types of advisory groups. The first is the standing committee. The Mayor and City Council appoint citizens to serve on six standing committees:

- Budget Committee
- PAVE Committee
- Urban Area Planning Commission
- Grants Pass Parks Advisory Board
- Historic Buildings and Sites Commission
- Bikeways & Walkways Committee
- Committee on Public Art
- Industrial Development Loan Review Committee
- Tourism Advisory Committee
- Urban Tree Advisory Committee
- Solid Waste Agency

These committees make recommendations to the City Council on policy issues and advise City staff on certain operational matters.

The second type of advisory group is the ad hoc committee. The City Council appoints ad hoc committees to study and make recommendations on specific issues. These committees disband when the assigned task is completed. Currently the City has the following Ad Hoc Committee(s).

- Urban Renewal Task Force
- Allen Creek Soccer Task Force

City Organizational Chart

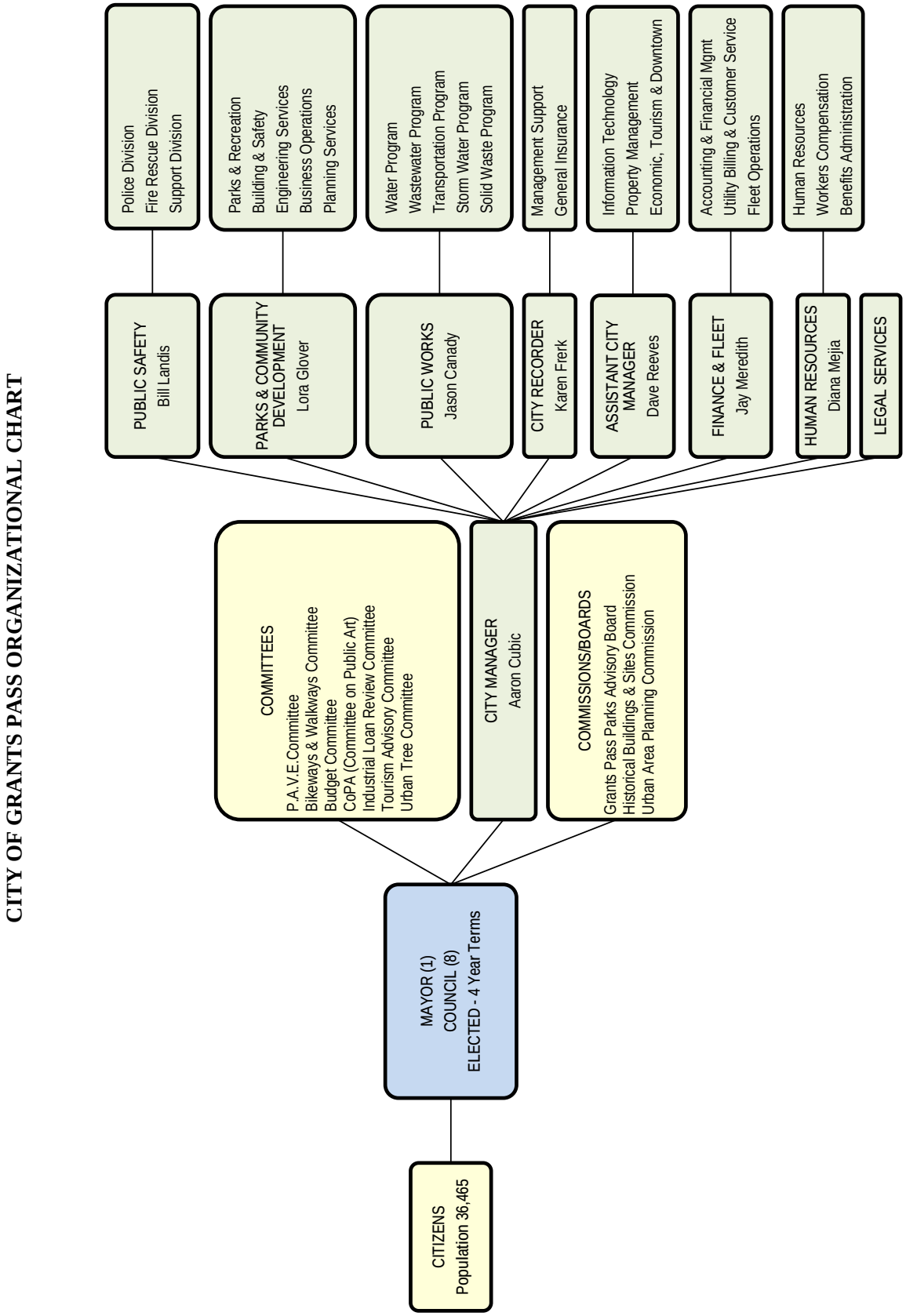
The Organization Chart for the City of Grants Pass displays the full time equivalencies and the methods of reporting for the City organization. Your local government is a broad mix of services. We operate three independent utilities: Solid Waste, Water, and Wastewater. The governmental side of our organization is dominated by Public Safety, delivering a range of law enforcement, fire, and preventive services. The management of growth and development is vested in our Community Development Department. Street maintenance and drainage systems are provided by Public Works. Park maintenance, together with the downtown and tourism programs, is administered by Parks and Community Services. The third part of our community promotional system, Economic Development, is located in the City Manager's office.

The organization is divided into five major divisions; Public Safety, Administrative Services, Community Development, Parks and Community Services, and Public Works. The directors for these major responsibilities, along with the City Attorney, Assistant City Manager and the City Manager, constitute the Executive Management team for the City. The City Manager and this team meet routinely to coordinate the delivery of services and analyze issues for the City Council's decision making.

The following organization charts show each department and its permanent personnel. We extensively use volunteers, contractors, and on-call/seasonal personnel that are not shown in the organization chart. A great example is Public Safety where dozens of full-time job equivalents are created in the many services provided by the department through firefighting interns, on-call personnel for office and dispatching services, and countless hours of volunteer support for the Public Safety Academy and Auxiliary Services.

The City of Grants Pass is a dynamic organization. We are constantly working to develop better ways to coordinate services and assure our residents the best possible services delivered in a way that makes sense and meets the needs of most of our citizens.

City Organizational Chart



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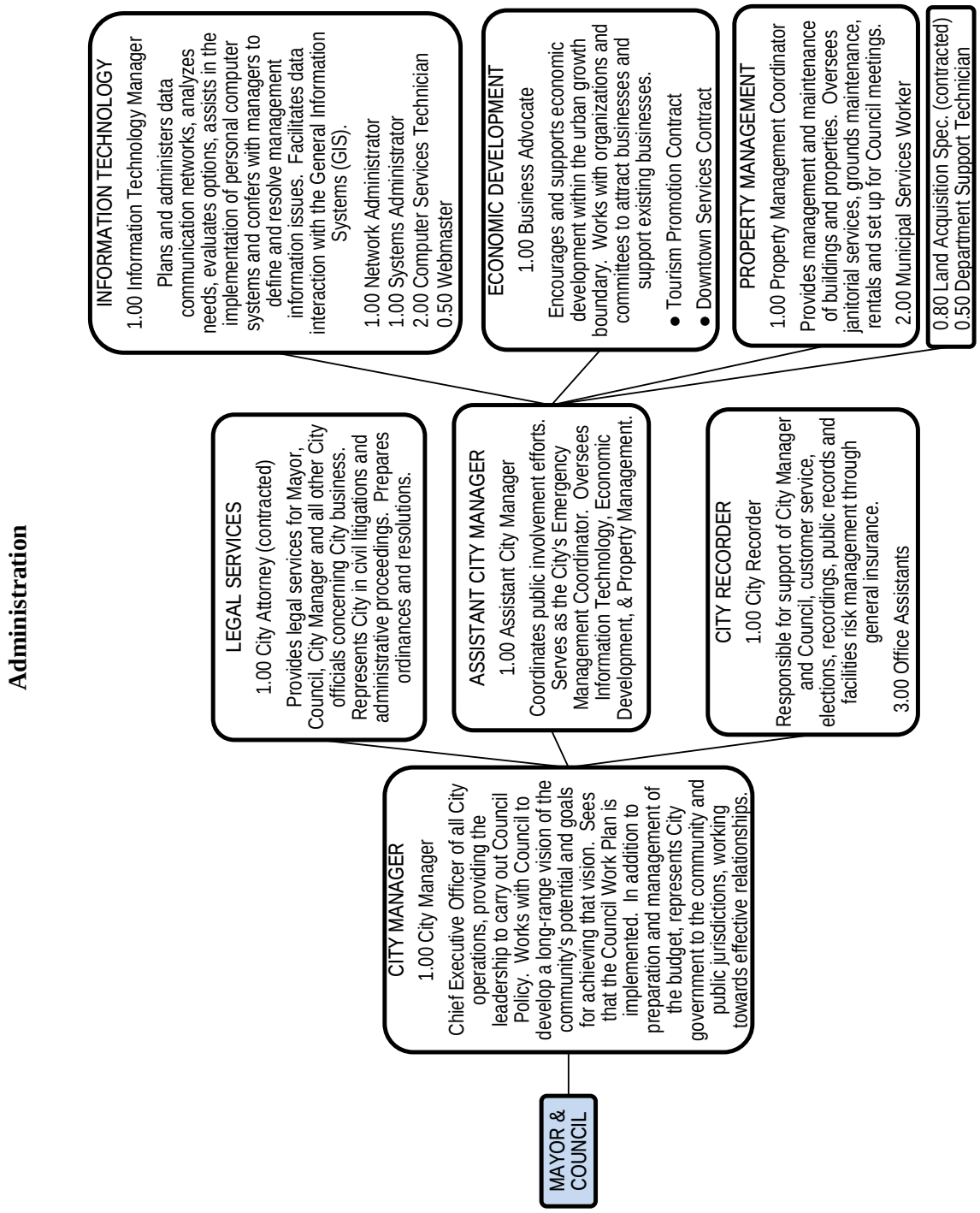
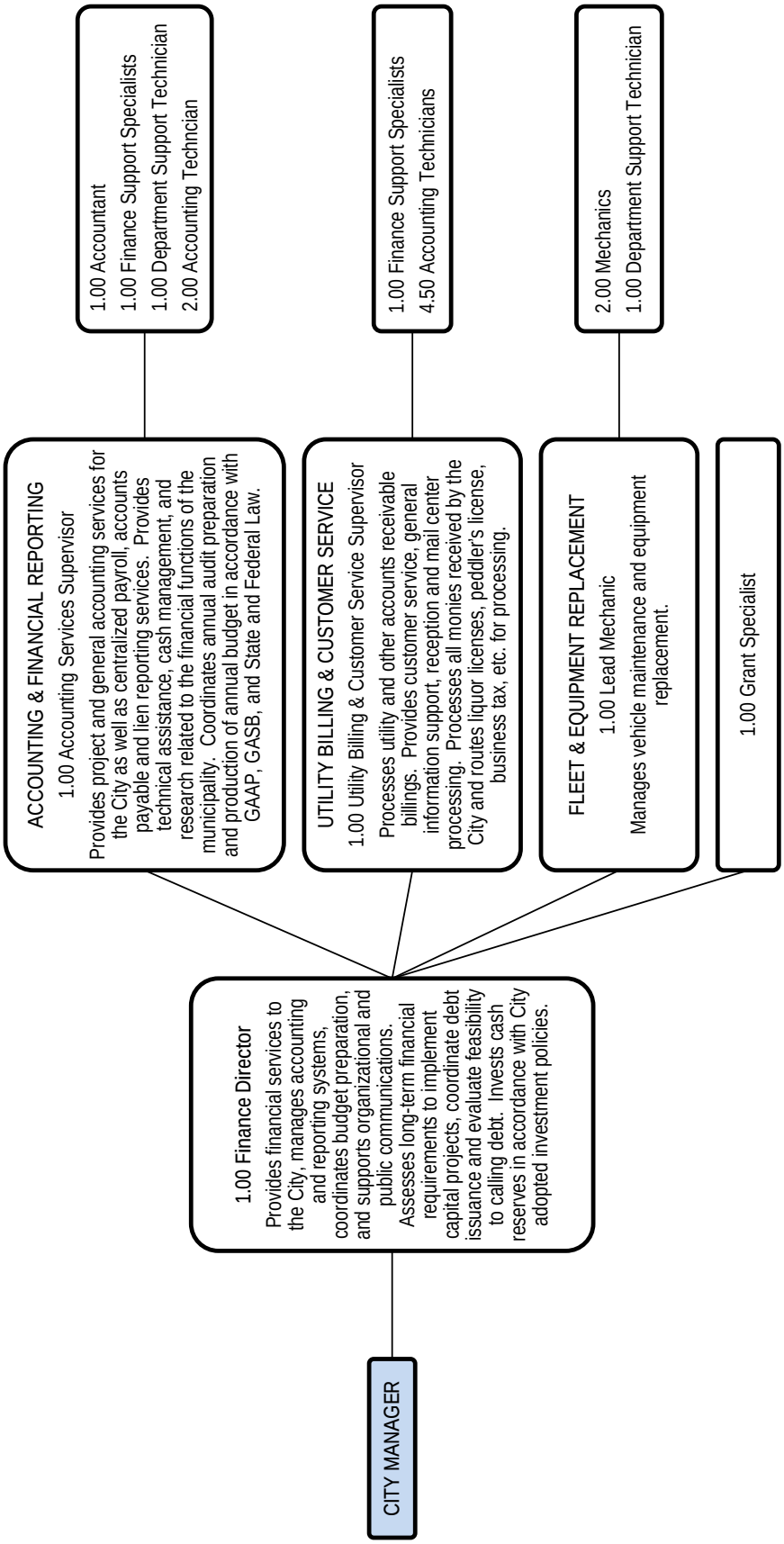


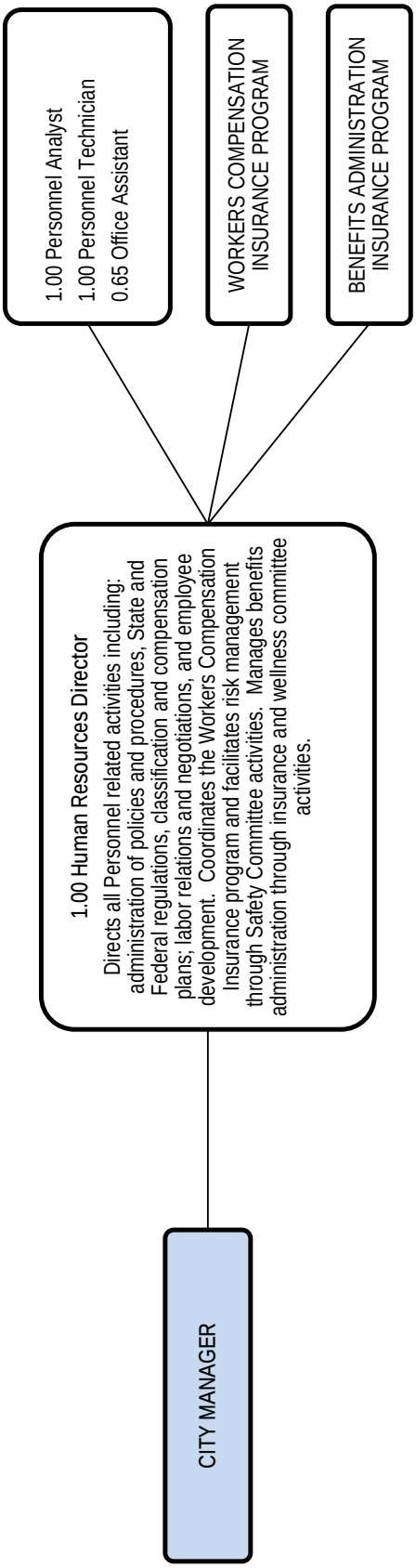
City Organizational Chart

Finance & Fleet



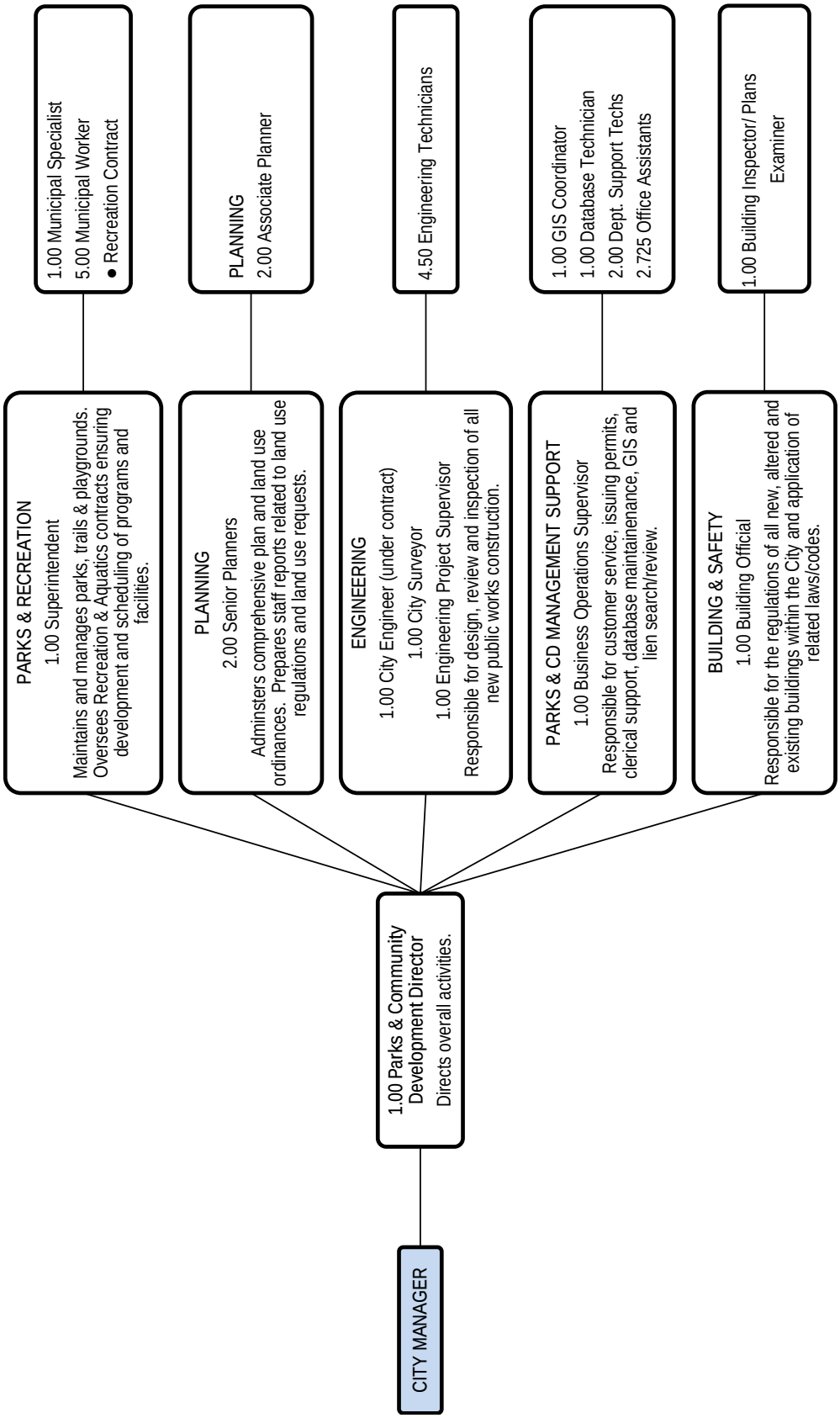
City Organizational Chart

Human Resources



City Organizational Chart

Parks & Community Development



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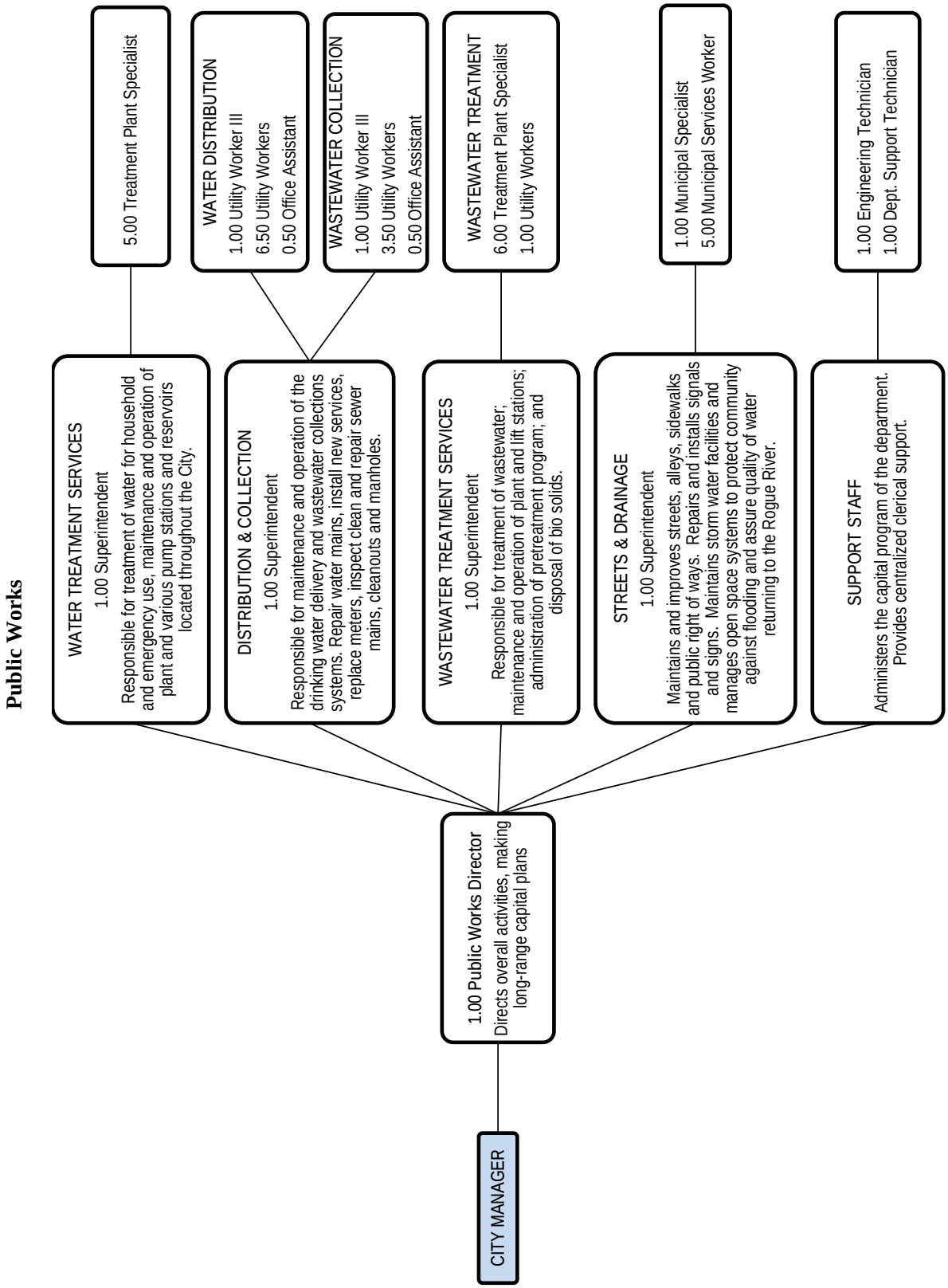
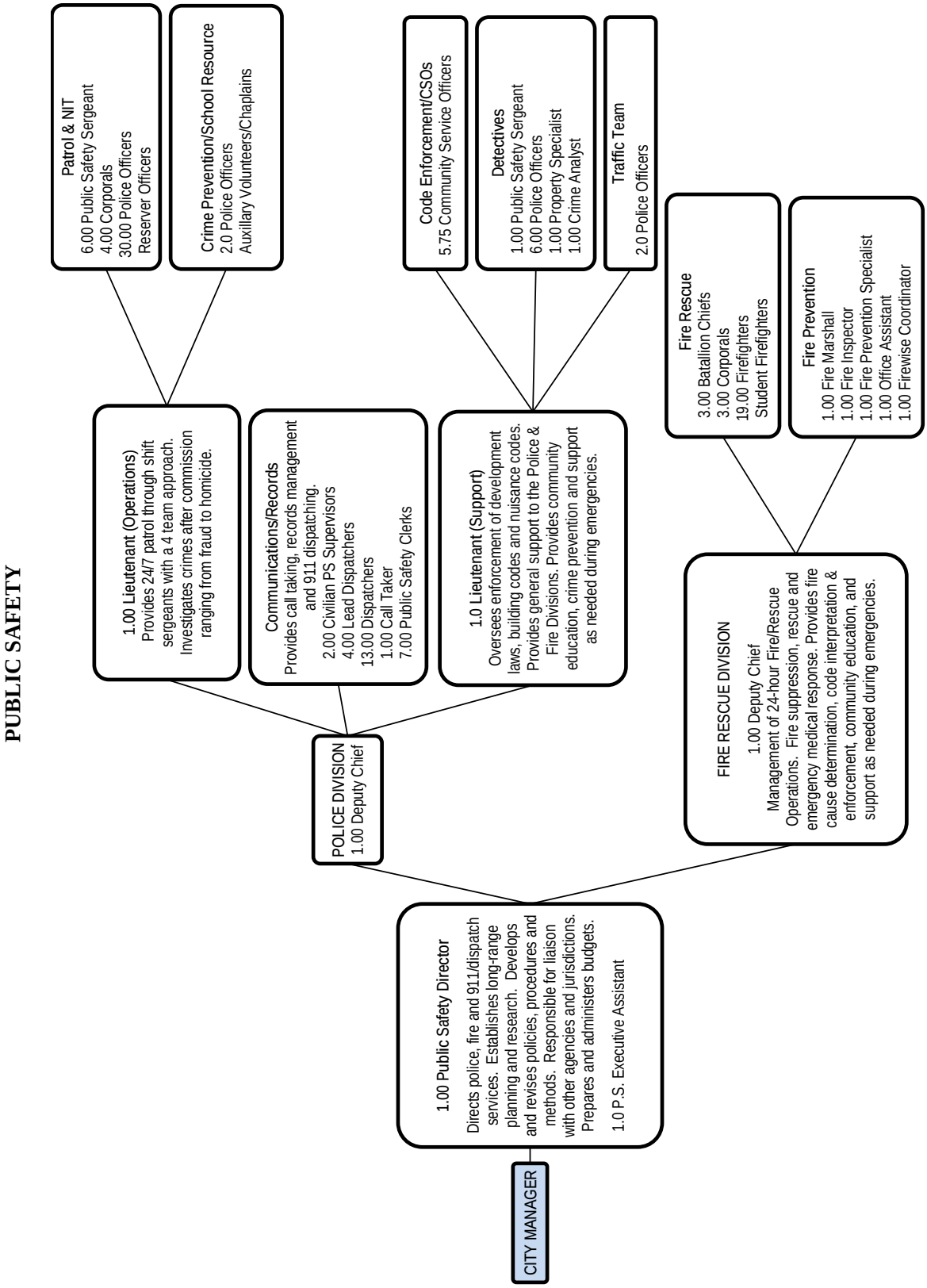
City Organizational Chart