

**CITY OF TIFFIN
CITY ADMINISTRATOR
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL
January 16, 2026**

- Bids were opened on Thursday for the Forevergreen Road/Jasper Avenue Improvements Project (roundabout). The estimate for the total project was \$6.69M. Current low bid came in at \$5.04M. There is a percentage split of this project with North Liberty. Once the bids have been reviewed by the engineer and the final bid tab is completed, I will include that in the electronic packet or hand it out on Tuesday night.
- The third readings of Ordinance No. 2025-522 and No. 2025-523 have been removed from the agenda as final plats and final plat documents have not been completed yet.
- Brian Shay will give his annual report at the meeting on Tuesday night. If there is time to review it in the work session, we will do that. If there is not time left in the work session to do that then Brian will discuss the report during the regular session.
- Even though we will be discussing the FY 2026 budget during the work session, I still think there will be a need for a special council meeting for budget discussions. Please be looking at your schedules for the week of February 9th for the special meeting.
- Attached is a highlighted draft of the results from the Minor Strategic Planning and Goal Setting session. Please review the document for accuracy. If there needs to be changes, please let me know. If there are none, I will have a final draft for council approval at the next council meeting.
- Attached for your review is a proposed City of Tiffin policy that outlines the use of public funds on employee-related recognition and morale activities. It defines which expenditures serve a valid public purpose, such as retirement events, tenure recognition, staff appreciation, and funeral flowers, and sets clear limits on what is allowable. The policy permits spending on food, non-cash gifts, and City-branded items for milestones, while prohibiting other purchases such as gift cards. It also establishes spending caps for different types of recognition and specifies eligibility criteria, while making the City Administrator responsible for oversight and updates.
- Just a friendly reminder of the joint work session with the Clear Creek Amana School on Wednesday, February 4th at 6:00 p.m. at the District Office in Oxford.



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Mayor/Council/Staff Questionnaire Responses

I. Major Accomplishments (Past 12–48 Months)

A. Infrastructure & Transportation

- Trail Phase 7 completion
- Forevergreen Road/Intersection resolution
- Highway 6 Roundabout
- Construction of Mehmen Avenue and South Kimberlite Street
- North Park Road Project underway
- Highway 6 Expansion Project (design phase)
- Completion and extension of Village Drive

B. Parks & Recreation Enhancements

- Built five new park shelters
- Built two new baseball/softball fields
- Lights added at Deerview Park and Potter Park
- Rehabilitation of two detention/retention ponds and added second fountain to Big Pond

C. Facilities & Utilities

- New Public Works Facility
- Well #5 completed
- Water Treatment Plant upgrade in progress
- Recreation Center construction in progress

D. Community Development & Growth

- Completed purchase of the Downtown Block
- Residential and commercial developments continuing and increasing
- Homemakers building and IHG Hotel coming to Tiffin

E. Governance & Operations

- Special Census performed
- Expanded economic development efforts
- Public Library brought under City umbrella with increased programming
- 5-year law enforcement contract with JCSD
- Implementation of hydrant flushing and valve exercising program
- Significant equipment upgrades across departments
- Hired Assistant City Administrator
- Transitioning to full-time Fire Chief
- City Code codification (almost complete)
- Updates to City website and agenda management tool

Mayor/Council/Staff Questionnaire Responses

II. Issues and Concerns

A. Infrastructure & Transportation

- Parking challenges during tournaments at City Park
- Traffic and pedestrian safety along Highway 6 (especially near schools) and overall walkability
- General future infrastructure needs (streets like RFR south of RR tracks, South Park Road)
- Traffic signals at Deerview and Highway 6
- Maintaining current city infrastructure

B. Accessibility & Inclusivity

- Compliance with ADA and WCAG 2.1 standards
- Inclusive policies and multilingual documents for city departments

C. Financial & Resource Planning

- Future financial planning for major infrastructure projects
- Ability to finance necessary upgrades (Water Plant, WWTP, Well #6)
- General increase in water budget for plant operations
- Need for additional personnel city-wide
- Planning for additional land for future City Hall

D. Public Safety & Services

- Future of law enforcement contract with JCSD
- Fire Department culture, organization, and facility needs

E. Community Engagement & Education

- Public education on water plant upgrades (softener adjustments/removal)
- Clear objectives and goals for each city department with deadlines and Council follow-up

F. Policy & Administration

- Onboarding, performance reviews, staff development tools
- Review of animal licensing and registration fees
- Review of municipal infractions enforcement mechanisms
- Current garbage and recycling contract

G. External Factors & Technology

- State legislative changes (property tax/TIF/LOST reform)
- Keeping current with technology

Mayor/Council/Staff Questionnaire Responses

III. Significant Minor Projects, Initiatives, or Programs (Next 60 Months)

A. Infrastructure & Utilities

- General street maintenance (crackfilling, dips, broken panels)
- Planning for water/sewer expansion upgrades
- Planning for traffic/road expansions
- Sealcoat/pave South Park Road, 340th Street, and shoulders on RFR
- Pave or sealcoat graveled portions of Public Works facility
- Generators for Water Tower and Well #3
- Comminutor/grinder for Park Road lift station
- Paint Water Tower with new logo and lighting
- Upgrade IT system at City Hall
- Continue GIS mapping of utilities

B. Parks & Recreation Enhancements

- Increase recreation programming and park upgrades (trash receptacles, robotic line painter)
- Construction of restrooms at Deerview Park and auxiliary fields
- Splash pad at Deerview Park
- Second dog park
- Improve all current ball diamonds
- Pave Trailhead parking lot off RFR
- Update recreation trail plan (expansion, signage, mapping)
- Stock detention/retention ponds
- Purchase land for park expansions and for long-term success/growth of City

C. Community Engagement & Programs

- Emphasis and expand community events (RecFest and similar)
- Create committees for volunteer involvement (e.g., Parks & Recreation Committee)
- ELL community programs and initiatives
- Institute employee wellness program

D. Economic Development & Branding

- Continue economic development initiatives (marketing, branding, beautification)
- Update animal licensing process
- Redo garbage and recycling contract

E. Sustainability & Innovation

- Renewable energy/conservation projects (solar field, flower turbines, rain gardens, native landscaping, tree planting)

F. Policy & Administration

- HR platform for onboarding, performance reviews, staff training
- Initiate rental inspection program with permits
- Verified vehicle replacement plan for Fire Department
- Increase/improve general efficiencies of all City operations

*Highlighted in yellow received the most votes

*Highlighted in teal are items that can be resolved by staff or are within an operational budget

Mayor/Council/Staff Questionnaire Responses

IV. Long-Term Significant Initiatives or Programs (After 2030)

A. Community Services & Amenities

- Explore childcare/BASP options at the Recreation Center
- Add aquatic component to Recreation Center (complete future phases)
- Plan for stand-alone Library
- Continue expanding recreation programs and major community amenities (e.g., amphitheater in Park Place)

B. Infrastructure & Transportation

- Update long-term transportation and arterial road network beyond current city limits
- Urbanization of RFR – including pedestrian bridge and sidewalks
- Urbanization of South Park Road
- Pave shoulders on Robert Ferry Road (until urbanization can be done)
- Open tunnel under Highway 6
- Connect city trails to soccer park, Forevergreen Road, and beyond
- Explore regional transit hub connecting Tiffin to Iowa City and Coralville

C. Public Safety & Facilities

- Fire Station expansion to include JCSD and Johnson County Ambulance
- Establish a City of Tiffin Police Department
- Plan for additional Public Works space and future staffing needs

D. Economic Development & Branding

- Continue economic development efforts and incentives
- Create business incubator/innovation hub for startups and shared resources
- Rebrand city logo strategy (use traditional ‘crossroads’ for signage, new logo for digital)

E. Land Acquisition & Growth

- Continue purchasing properties in Original Town and finalize redevelopment plan
- Purchase land for park expansions as city grows
- Explore annexation south of I-80 and 340th Street

F. Sustainability & Technology

- Renewable energy projects (e.g., solar field for utility offset)
- Continue GIS mapping of city utilities
- Invest in robotic line painter and other efficiency tools

G. Parks & Recreation Enhancements

- Light remaining two ball diamonds in Jim Bartels Tiffin City Park

H. Policy & Administration

- Initiate rental inspection program with permits
- Develop a Staff Plan for City’s personnel growth

*Highlighted in yellow received the most votes to become a priority

*highlighted in teal are items that can be resolved by staff or are within an operational budget



Public Expenditures Policy

Approved by Doug Boldt, City Administrator
Date: January 2026

SECTION 1

PURPOSE

The City of Tiffin values the contributions of its employees in fulfilling the mission of the City and providing quality services to our community. While there are occasions when public dollars are expended on activities to promote employee morale, it is important to recognize that such expenditures are public funds for public purposes under the law. This policy is to comply with detailing the public purpose of certain expenditures and to guide the requests for reimbursement of such expenditures, when the public purpose cannot easily be quantified. The City Administrator's Office has responsibility for enforcing this policy.

The following expenditures qualify as public purposes:

- Employee retirement events
- Employment tenure recognition
- Staff recognition events
- Funeral flowers

Employee Retirement Events

Costs related to employee retirement events, as detailed below, are allowable expenses.

A. Allowable Expenses

- a. Costs related to open houses are an allowable expense. This includes refreshments such as cake, cookies, other dessert, fruit, vegetables, cheese, punch, coffee, and associated paper products. This does not include alcohol.
- b. Costs related to gifts or gift certificates are not an allowable expense.
- c. Non-allowable expenses may be covered by employee contributions.

B. Eligible Employees

- a. Eligible employees are those who qualify for retirement under their retirement system and have filed for retirement.
- b. This applies to welcome or farewell events for the City Administrator, City Attorney, Assistant City Administrator, City Clerk, Council members, Board and Commission members or those designated by the City Administrator.

Employment Tenure Recognition

Costs related to recognition of employees' tenure with the City are allowable expenses, as detailed below.

A. Allowable Expenses

- a. Official City of Tiffin branded merch will be purchased. These items are awarded on each of the employee's five-year employment anniversaries beginning at the end of the fifth year of employment.
- b. A retirement gift, such as a clock or similar item, including the City's logo and a tribute to the employees' years of service.
- c. Framed certificate recognizing years of service.

Staff Recognition Events

Costs related to staff recognition are allowable expenses, as detailed below.

A. Allowable Expenses

- a. Food, non-alcoholic beverage and supply costs for up to three annual all-staff lunches.
- b. Modest gifts and awards (i.e. snacks, plaques, increments of paid time off) for certain recognitions as approved by the City Administrator's Office.

Type of Recognition	Typical Limit (Best Practice)	Notes
General recognition / morale gift	Up to \$25 per employee per occurrence	Tangible, low-value items (non-cash). Should align with modest recognition standards approved by the City Administrator.
Service milestone / tenure	Up to \$400 based on recommended cap by the IRS	Retirement gifts may include plaques, clocks, or similar.
Retirement recognition event	Up to \$300	Food and supply costs for open houses are allowable; Alcohol is not permitted.
Recognition award	Up to \$25	Must be <i>modest</i> in nature; non-cash; permitted only when approved by the City Administrator.

Funeral Flowers

Costs related to the purchase of funeral flowers or non-cash memorials (i.e. flowers, a garden stone, etc.) for the following are allowable expenses.

A. Allowable costs

- a. Costs not to exceed \$100.
- b. Funerals for employees, City Council members and Board and Commission members are allowable expenses.
- c. Funeral for employees' spouses, parents, parent in-laws, children and grandchildren are allowable expenses.

The City Administrator's Office is responsible for approving this policy and for updates to this policy.