

**GOWING** *from A1*

Those challenging the re-districting seemed to have since dropped their efforts, which would clear the way for the process to continue. The map will take effect for Oregon's 2022 congressional elections.

Locally, HD 12 will in large part encompass what was previously HD 7, represented by Republican Representative Cedric Hayden.

Hayden announced this week he will seek election in the newly-configured Senate District 6, leaving the House seat open.

The new HD 12 map differs from the current HD 7 in that it will extend much farther to the east — as far as Waldo Lake. Cottage Grove and Creswell squeeze into the western end of the district, which will also cover the towns of Oakridge, Lowell and Pleasant Hill.

Northward, the district wraps around the city limits of Eugene/Springfield and encompasses the towns of Junction City and Coburg.

Gowing's run for the House seat is part of an effort to shift some focus of Oregon's legislature down to the rural level. He said he has noticed that since many meetings have gone virtual, there is no longer an excuse for representatives, even if they live far away, to not attend events like city council meetings.

During a virtual chat with governmental officials for this year's "City Day at the Capitol", he said there was a noticeable lack of legislators.

"And that just was a big eye-opener for me that we're not getting the support that we need," he said.

Among issues he addressed is a "one size fits all" approach he has seen come out of the capitol.

"It doesn't matter if you're in Elkton or Portland, you've got the same [policy]," Gowing explained. "Cottage Grove and Eugene are two entirely different cities and what works there doesn't work here. We shouldn't have the same guidelines to go by. So there needs to be a lot more local control."

Gowing is also hoping to work toward eliminating unfunded mandates handed down from above.

His roots in a small town are what part of what can set him apart as a legislator, he said.

As mayor, he noted that people sometimes refer to him as a politician, but he corrects them.

"I always tell them — and I'm going to keep to this — that I'm not a politician; I'm an elected official," he said. "The politician's doing it for the wrong reasons. They're doing it for the fame and glory and whatever can get them ahead. An elected official's doing it for the people and representing the people."

Part of his approach in public office, he said, has been to allow personal opinions to take a side seat in order to do what's best for the community.

"I'd rather be hated for what I am than loved from what I'm not," he added.

On this point, Gowing has some experience.

He first took a seat on the Cottage Grove City Council in 2009. Born and raised in Cottage Grove, Gowing had come to appreciate community building and felt he had something to add to the way city business was conducted.

Though initially setting his sights on the mayoral seat, chats with the mayor at the time Gary Williams and others on council con-

vinced him to instead opt for a council seat which was being vacated.

Eventually, in 2016, Gowing won out in a three-way race for that mayoral position.

It was early in his council experience, though, that Gowing ran into one of his first difficult decisions. Around 2010, he recalls, the Village Green was asking the city for a loan of \$250,000 to offset losses during the recession.

All but one other councilor was on board with the loan.

"I had business owners calling me and having meetings with me to try to convince me to vote to support this. And I just had a really hard time with it," he said.

One business owner gave him some advice, though, which steered him toward his decision.

Gowing pored over paperwork to find some plan that the Village Green could present which would make the loan pencil out. He couldn't find it.

"And in my gut, I couldn't do it. And so, I voted no," he said. "And I really thought, 'I'm the new guy. Everybody's gonna hate me.'"

His worries turned out to be unwarranted, however. Though the vote passed with a majority in favor of

the loan, Gowing received no blowback, confirming to him that it was possible to make a principled stand in public office and maintain respect.

Ultimately, the loan was never completed as an agreement could not be reached on the stipulations.

"And so, I lost the vote, but I won in the end because of the way it played out," Gowing smiled.

Gowing also took an isolated stand on the controversial Main Street Refinement Plan years ago, voting against it.

One strong influence on the decision, he said, was the time he spent face-to-face with several downtown business owners who were critical of the plan. In the end, he went with what he felt was the community's voice.

Gowing also recalled a time as mayor when Cottage Grove's state representatives were holding a town hall. The mayor used the opportunity to push back against a bill at the time which would do away with recreational immunity. His position found support among groups on both sides of the political aisle within the town, which he said exemplified the kinds of solutions which can be unearthed in small communities.

Finding these solutions can in part be helped along by enhancing communication channels with public officials, Gowing stated, pointing to his own habit of giving out his personal cell phone number.

As a state representative, he hopes to find ways of overcoming social division by opening up these channels and simply being more present, especially when the legislature is out of session.

"We've got such a divided country right now," he said. "If you show up and make that effort, I think that it would do a lot for the people."

Though the role would take him to the capitol, Gowing emphasized his love for small-town community would not wane.

"I look forward to continuing to serve my community, along with the other parts of the district," he said.

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# Worship Directory

<p><b>COTTAGE GROVE:</b> <b>6th &amp; Gibbs Church of Christ</b> 195 N. 6th St. • 541-942-3822 10:00am Christian Education: Pre-K through 5th Tim Baker, Senior Minister www.6thandgibbs.com</p>	<p><b>First Baptist Church</b> 301 S. 6th St • 541-942-8242 Pastor: David Chhange Sunday School 9:30am Worship Service 10:30am Youth Wednesday 6:30pm cgfirstbaptist.com</p>	<p><b>St. Andrews Episcopal Church</b> 1301 W. Main • 541-767-9050 Rev. Lawrence Crumb "Scripture, Tradition, Reason" Worship: Sunday 10:30am All Welcome</p>
<p><b>Calvary Baptist Church</b> 77873 S 6th St • 541-942-4290 Pastor: Riley Hendricks Sunday School: 9:45am Worship: 11:00am The Journey: Sunday 5:00pm Praying Thru Life: Wednesday 6:00pm</p>	<p><b>First Presbyterian Church</b> 3rd and Adams St 541-942-4479 Rev.: Karen Hill Worship: 10:00am Sunday School: 10:00am fpcgrove.com</p>	<p><b>Seventh-day Adventist Church</b> 820 South 10th Street 541-942-5213 Pastor: James D. Boram Bible Study: Saturday, 9:15 am Worship Service: Saturday, 10:40 Mid-week Service: Wednesday, 1:00</p>
<p><b>Church of Christ</b> 420 Monroe St • 541-942-8565 Sunday Service: 10:30am</p>	<p><b>Hope Fellowship</b> United Pentecostal Church 100 S. Gateway Blvd. 541-942-2061 Pastor: Dave Bragg Worship: 11:00am Sunday Bible Study: 7:00pm Wednesday www.hopefellowshipupc.com "FINDING HOPE IN YOUR LIFE"</p>	<p><b>Trinity Lutheran Church</b> 6th &amp; Quincy • 541-942-2373 Pastor: James L. Markus Sunday School &amp; Adult Education 9:15am Sunday Worship 10:30 am Comm. Kitchen Free Meal Tue &amp; Thur 5:00pm TLC Groups tlccg.com</p>
<p><b>Church of Christ Non-Denominational</b> 1041 Pennoyer Ave 541-942-8928 Preacher: Tony Martin Sunday Bible Study: 10:00am Sunday Worship: 10:50am &amp; 5:30pm www.pennoyervecoc.com</p>	<p><b>Living Faith Assembly</b> 467 S. 10th St. • 541-942-2612 Worship Services Sundays: 9a &amp; 11a umcgrove.org Youth Worship Sundays: 11a (all ages welcome) Mondays: 5:30p (6th-12th grades)</p>	<p><b>"VICTORY" Country Church</b> 913 S. 6th Street • 541-942-5913 Pastor: Barbara Dockery Worship Service: 10:00am Message: "WE BELIEVE IN MIRACLES"</p>
<p><b>Cottage Grove Bible Church</b> 1200 East Quincy Avenue 541-942-4771 Pastor: Bob Singer Worship 11am Sunday School: 9:45am AWANA age 3-8th Grade, Wednesdays Sept-May, 6:30pm www.cgbible.org</p>	<p><b>Our Lady of Perpetual Help and St. Philip Benizi Catholic Churches</b> 1025 N. 19th St. 541-942-3420 Father John J. Boyle Holy Mass: Saturday Vigil - 5:30 pm Sunday - 10:30 am For weekday and Holy Day of Obligation schedule see website OLPHCG.net Confession: 4 PM to 5 PM Saturdays or by appointment St. Philip Benizi, Creswell 552 Holbrook Lane Sunday 8 am</p>	<p><b>CRESWELL:</b> <b>Creswell Presbyterian Church</b> 913 S 4th S • 541-895-3419 Rev. Seth Wheeler Adult Sunday School 9:15am Sunday Worship Service 10:30 am website www.creswellpres.org</p>

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