

Tess Albin-Smith, Councilmember

Tess Albin-Smith has been a City of Fort Bragg councilmember since 2018. She participates in numerous regional and statewide committees to benefit the City, coordinate planning efforts, and identify best practices to be deployed in our region.

Key priorities include:

- Implementation of new broadband infrastructure to provide affordable, reliable high-speed internet
- Repair and Expansion of Fort Bragg's parks and fields
- Preparing for climate change impacts by diversifying our economy and making Fort Bragg a hub for research and education facilities

Councilmember Albin-Smith has been a strong proponent of establishing fast, affordable and reliable broadband connectivity for Fort Bragg. She recognizes that we need high speed internet to attract new businesses and support light industry, which will improve job, wage, and educational opportunities, and help diversify the economic base for the city. To accomplish this, the City is initiating a municipally owned broadband utility. This project involves city-wide construction of digital infrastructure (underground conduit, fiber, and electronics) through a fiber-to-the-premise (FTTP) network, with speeds between 1- 10Gbps. When this project is completed, nearly 3,100 households and 900 businesses will have access to 21st century gigabit speeds and be poised for long-term economic growth.

Councilmember Albin-Smith has also been a leader in advocating for expanded parks and improved playing fields. New and improved parks enhance the local quality of life for all, and improved fields and sports facilities gives children a healthy outlet for time and play. With new or repaired high caliber playing fields, facilities Fort Bragg can once again attract the business and tourism benefits that come from hosting regional tournaments. This year the City is adding a 50' x 80' artificial surface soccer field to Bainbridge Park, replacing the play equipment at the Wiggly Giggly Playground, and developing a trail plan with interpretive signage for Otis R. Johnson Wilderness Park.

Councilmember Albin-Smith is a career scientist now focused on the importance of recalibrating Fort Bragg's economy and preparing for a future impacted by climate change. She has joined numerous committees and boards to advocate for electric transit busses, adding charging stations, improved traffic planning with bicycle and hiking options. Coastal regions like Fort Bragg are already seeing the effects of sea level rise and warming, a decline of fisheries, loss of kelp forests, drought impacts to the redwoods, and extreme weather and seasonal patterns. Albin-Smith believes Fort Bragg is well-suited to become a hub for research and education and pursuing innovative solutions. The recent "Blue Economy Symposium & Learning Festival" helped kick start a coordinated regional effort in pursuit of this economic opportunity, and we expect more work ahead to collaborate with partners, secure funding, and make the right investments to position Fort Bragg as the premier location for this type of climate and ocean research work.

Councilmember Albin-Smith is a member of:

- City Finance/Administration Committee Chair
- Public Works and Facilities Committee
- Economic Development and Financing Corp. Board of Directors (BOD)
- Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) BOD
- Calif. Council of Governments (CalCOG) BOD
- Mendocino Transit Authority BOD
- Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee
- City Broadband Committee
- City PEG Access Committee
- City Visit Ft Bragg Comm. Chair
- League of Cities (LOC) Revenue and Taxation Comm.
- LOC Env. Quality Committee
- LOC Coastal Cities Group Leadership Committee
- City Wide Design Guidelines
- Economic Development
- City Communications Comm.