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### **Craig Covey Elected Mayor In Ferndale Historic Election A First For Michigan**

Ferndale voters today elected Craig Covey as the new mayor in this small city of 22,000 people in Southeast Oakland County. This marks the first time voters have directly elected an openly gay person mayor in the state.

**"We are showing the region a new way," said Covey, 50, an an eighteen year resident. "This city embraces diversity, smart growth, efficiency, bi-partisan compromise, and eco-friendly policies," he added. "We reject urban sprawl, partisanship, waste, and the old ways of division and fear among communities."**

Ferndale has seen remarkable growth and popularity over the past decade. Once a sleepy, hard-scrabble, older suburb at-risk, the city during the past decade has seen the fastest growing property values in the region, and has a 95% occupancy rate in its thriving downtown. Neon lights attract a vibrant nightlife, with young couples, families, gays, artists, and other creative professionals bringing Ferndale back and putting it on the map.

The city is now known as a leader in the efforts to bring mass transit to the metro area and has advocated for greener policies and more regional cooperation. It is also known as a safe place for diverse communities, including the most visible GLBT community in the state.

**"I'm an optimist," said Covey. "The voters have spoken loud and clear...that they want efficient government that works for and with the residents and visitors. They want smart government that works within its means, using best practices and without higher taxes and waste. Above all, they want inclusion, not exclusion. With these policies, greater things will happen." "If we can't get solid leadership from Lansing or from Washington, then we will do what we need to do right here," added Covey.**