



**2017 State of the City
Mayor Kris Turnbow
July 24, 2017**

Welcome to all of you today,

When I stood before you a year ago, as your new mayor, I set expectations high for myself, the council and our City. I knew I was asking a lot and was pushing for some lofty goals. Today, I am thrilled to share that I am truly impressed by the progress we have all made in such a short time together.

Every corner of our City has seen some kind of improvement or growth during this past year. From the voter-approved bonds that are transforming our parks to the incredible growth in new residents and businesses in our City, we are proving day-after-day that the state of our City is strong — and we are only just getting started.

Branding efforts

With so much change and expansion, it is important that we do not forget who we are as a community. Formed in 1858 from nothing more than grit, pride and vision, we know roots run deep in Raymore. It is our pioneering spirit from those original days that continues to motivate and inspire us as we shepherd our community today and the next generation.

As we move further through the exciting rebranding of our community, we are tapping into that abundant community pride and exploring new ways to share that with visitors and investors throughout the region.

More importantly, as rebranding moves forward, keep in mind that the goal of rebranding is not about changing who we are.

Rather, it is about defining those things our residents already know and discovering what we aspire to become in the future.



New Development

Housing

We will not change those core values that have allowed Raymore to offer the safety and spirit of a small town. We will continue to explore amenities and attractions you could find in any big city while enjoying easy access to the rest of the metro area. Our growing housing options make it easy for anyone to call Raymore home.

This has never been more apparent than in this past year as the City issued 215 permits for new homes in our community; a 10-year high for Raymore. This added more than \$50 million in valuation to our City. We are poised to grow even more in 2017 with 132 permits already issued year-to-date.

This growth does not go unnoticed by others in the region. We continue to rank in the top 10 for residential growth in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

Home builders regularly look to Raymore as a true barometer for residential growth in all of Cass County.

New Businesses

Of course, as our population continues to grow, we need to ensure we are meeting the needs of our residents. Our economic development team remains committed to connecting business owners and developers with landowners, building sites, existing locations, workers and customers.

As a City, we have developed a strategy that will focus on attracting the right developers to more than a dozen areas throughout the community that are prime locations for redevelopment as well as new businesses, restaurants and office space that will serve our residents.

Already we are seeing progress as new development takes shape along 58 Highway. Soon, we will begin to see even more exciting development move south along the I-49 corridor and along North Cass Parkway as we continue our efforts to promote our community in the region and across the nation to new development partners.

We remain focused on bringing new development to these important areas. The intersection of 58 Highway and the new Kentucky Road offer a blank canvas where we can attract new amenities for our residents.



Our goal is to give residents more ways to dine, shop and work in Raymore.

We will also remain a strong partner with our Chamber of Commerce to ensure we stay in tune with the needs of our existing businesses and to work hand-in-hand with those businesses who have already contributed so much to our success.

New Amenities

As businesses invest in our community, we are also investing in the amenities and infrastructure that ties our City together.

Since the passage of the 2016 no-tax increase General Obligation Bonds, we have already seen significant progress in some of the major projects promised through these two significant measures.

- The parking lots and trails at Recreation Park have been improved.
- The vital 58 Highway mill & overlay project was completed almost a year ago.
- Centerview is complete and open for business as you see here today. We are already booking numerous events at this wonderful community event space.
- We just celebrated the groundbreaking of the new Raymore Activity Center, a new indoor gymnasium and activity space at Recreation Park which will allow for the expansion of many more indoor programs. We anticipate opening in the Summer of 2018.
- Designs are completed for the two new roadway extensions and the relocation of Kentucky, which will improve the safety of drivers and spur new development in each of those areas. Anticipated completion is Summer 2018.
- Plans are being finalized for the new ADA playground and amphitheater at Hawk Ridge Park. This new park will truly become a regional destination with the new amenities and features planned for its future. Anticipated completion is Fall 2018.

Outside of the promised bond projects, there are still other Parks & Recreation projects underway that will improve the quality of our community.



- Through a generous donation from Lowe's, Recreation Park is now home to The Fort, a fun natural playspace that invites children to explore the wooden playground and wooded area next to Moon Valley Park.
- Visitors to the Recreation Park baseball fields have gotten a reprieve from the summer sun with the new sun shades.
- Memorial Park will have new walking trails and ADA accessible baseball fields and a new playground to make this park welcoming to residents of all ages and abilities. Final completion is Summer 2018.
- Memorial Park will also soon be officially designated an Arboretum. Another amenity that makes this park special right in the heart of our community. Completion is Spring 2018.

The City of Raymore is home to more than 285 acres of parkland and greenspace connected by over 20 miles of trails and walking paths — and those numbers are going to grow.

Regardless of where you live in our community, residents are never far from fun.

Roadway improvements

Of course, we could not have exciting new projects, if we did not take care of and invest wisely in the existing infrastructure we already have. Each year, we spend more than \$1,500,000 to improve our roadways, fix our curbs and maintain our sidewalks.

While each project might not come with as much celebration or a ribbon cutting like Centerview did, this does not make them any less important. The quality of our roadways and other infrastructure builds the solid foundation from which everything else can grow.

It is critical that we continue to remain focused on these projects and recognize the influence our maintenance programs have on our future growth.

Responsive to resident needs

What makes these projects special, to me, is not just that they will improve our community, but that they were planned in response to the feedback we received from our residents. Whether it is through the regular community survey, the



community conversation or just the day-to-day meetings my council Colleagues and I have with residents, their input influences everything we do.

The voices of our residents and business owners remain the driving force that propels our community forward and nowhere is that better reflected than in the leadership reorganization undertaken by our City Manager.

We heard loud and clear that public safety, community development and communication were the top priorities for our residents.

By focusing our resources and staffing around these areas, we are not only being responsive to what our residents have told us in the past, but we are now in a better position to respond to their needs in the future.

Reimagine Raymore

With the guidance of our City Manager and his new leadership team, I have the utmost confidence that the day-to-day operations of our City are being done by some of the finest professionals that have our community's interests clearly in their sights.

Still, even with an innovative and exciting new structure at City Hall, at the top of our organizational chart sits our residents.

That is why I propose that we continue the Reimagine Raymore community conversations we started in 2016 and invite the public back in 2018 for a new round of discussions. Many planned projects will be completed or near completion by then and this will give us an opportunity to follow up directly with our residents on the ideas they generated. It certainly will help us develop even more for the next year and beyond.

There is no shortage of projects and development we could discuss. As our community continues to grow, we must also keep an eye on the future and the possibility of expanding our city limits to make sure future opportunities are not wasted. The process of annexing is not one that we take lightly and will require many conversations with surrounding residents along with open and honest discussions about the benefits of City Services. We understand much must be considered and we will certainly tread lightly and with great compassion in this sophisticated process of partnering with fellow Cass County residents.



Our Citizens are the ones I report to as your Mayor and it is their voice I want to continue to hear as we begin to chart the direction of Raymore for the new generation.

Conclusion

As we look forward to another year of big projects and high expectations, I know we have it inside all of us to weather any new challenges or hurdles that may come with our progress. Growing pains are to be expected.

Over the past year I have come to know each of you better and our synergy has really blossomed. The respect I have for the elected body is immense and I consider it a privilege to work with such passionate and ethical public servants.

We have proven ourselves to not just stand firm in what we believe is right as a community, but we have shown that our City can thrive under any condition so long as we have our residents in our hearts and the future of our community in our minds.

Thank you.