



Mayor Kristofer Turnbow

State of the City

May 2019

I have had the absolute pleasure of serving as your Mayor through some of Raymore's biggest successes.

We saw unprecedented growth and development. With the passage of a 10+ million dollar bond issue we have brought new roads and parks features. And with that has come an expansion of our arts programs that brings our community together to experience music, theater and other creative activities we had not seen before in our community.

We are a growing community and strive each day to meet the needs of our residents with high-quality services and amenities that they have come to expect.

Still, there are a number of challenges that we will face in the coming year:

Public Safety

For me, and many others, the safety and security of our community is a top priority. With the excellent leadership of Chief Zimmerman and her command staff, we continue to hear from residents that they have an incredibly high level of satisfaction with our Police Department.

Our own ETC Citizen Satisfaction Survey showed that 100% of residents felt safe in our City during the day and they feel safe at an incredible 95+% the rest of the time. We set the bar high when it comes to our law enforcement services and we will continue to set the bar high as we lead Cass County with our own Mobile Command Vehicle.

This vehicle was made possible in generous partnership with the South Metro Fire Protection District and we look forward to seeing it in action for a variety of responses by public safety.

This high-tech vehicle will not only serve as a physical place to stage operations during a major incident, but it will have the capability to serve as a mobile 9-1-1 center in the event that City Hall is damaged or rendered unusable.

Our current emergency command trailer is more than 20 years old and has well out-lived its usefulness. It has become a relic of past expectations and it is time for our community to move forward and face those challenges that will come in the future.

Growth

Another challenge will be maintaining and planning for the growth we are expecting in the coming years in Raymore.



We continue to lead Cass County and the region in single-family home permits and our staff remains vigilant in watching housing trends around the country to ensure we are developing and building a community that not only welcomes residents of all ages and abilities, but one that is increasingly connected with trails, sidewalks and cycling opportunities.

Our staff has also committed itself to building connections with local and regional agencies when it comes to new ordinances such as the recently passed hoarding ordinance to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all of our residents.

The growth is driven by a dedicated staff and economic development team that is laser-focused on bringing unique and engaging developments that will serve our community and meet the needs of our residents.

Still, it will be our challenge to ensure that those developments are the kind of quality developments our residents expect and don't force us as a City to sacrifice things like services or infrastructure in pursuit of "The next great thing"

Services // FTEs

The services we provide to our residents are too important to take advantage of. This past winter tested the abilities of everyone at City Hall as staff responded to more than two dozen winter weather storms. For nearly three months staff continued the yeoman's work of plowing the streets, clearing City property and ensuring that the critical day-to-day functions of our City continued uninterrupted.

This is no easy task as the number of full-time positions at City Hall to provide these services has remained unchanged for the last 5 years. This is particularly impressive as in that same time, our community has grown from 19,891 to 21,784 residents. And in just the last few years we have constructed two new major parks facilities in the Raymore Activity Center and Centerview and expanded the number of services we offer to residents in that short time.

Our City's leadership, through City Manager Jim Feuerborn, have found ways to maximize the talents of every person working at City Hall. Again, our own citizen survey proved that residents not only think highly of the level of customer service they receive from our staff, but also feel they receive an incredible level of value for the amount of taxes and fees they pay.

Parks Success and Challenge

As we heard in May, the success of Centerview and RAC cannot be understated. We continue to see event bookings at both facilities grow and our Recreation programs have been able to save thousands of dollars in a single year not having to rent space elsewhere in the community for classes, sports and activities.

The challenge for you, The Council and I in the coming year, however, will be to ensure that success continues. We still have T.B. Hanna and Hawk Ridge Park to complete and both parks will require us to remain committed to the idea that EVERYONE deserves the chance to play. As two of our region's only inclusive playgrounds are constructed right here in Raymore, our parks will become a model for how future parks should be developed. They



will not only serve the immediate neighborhoods, but will become regional attractions that will not only drive visitors to our City, but attract future residents.

Final Bond Project

One final bond project from the 2016 election remains and - by many accounts - could be one of the most important when it comes to safety in our community. Since 2016, staff has been working to overcome a number of hurdles to build and finish this project. I am happy to announce that staff will be moving forward with this much-needed roadway that will connect Kentucky with a stoplight along 58 highway and reduce the number of accidents in our busy commercial corridor - and do it within budget.

Annexation

As we close the books on the most recent round of bond projects from 2016, we are focused on looking to the future of our community and where that may take us. This past year we contracted and consulted with a professional group to analyze the possibilities of annexing to our east.

We have heard over and over again - and even in the most recent citizen survey - that our residents want us to do something about improving 58 Highway. The best way to do that and to connect our partners in the Ray-Pec School District is to begin - in earnest - a discussion about annexing to the east.

Our challenge will be to continue those discussions and ensure that we take every step possible to be fair and transparent through any annexation process we pursue.

Future of our Community

Of course the boundaries of our City are not what defines us as a community. It is the diverse cultural and artistic opportunities as hosted through the Raymore Arts Commission and Raymore Community Foundation that - I believe - truly define who we are as a community.

Our residents are generous and kind and creative and these two groups within our City help channel and grow that incredible energy for everyone in our City to enjoy.

I continue to look forward to the exciting events and activities they each have planned this summer and into the future.

Conclusion

Tonight, I spoke about a number of remarkable successes and possible challenges.



As we face these challenges in the coming year, I hope I have outlined for you tonight how I, we, all can stand together and overcome each challenge for the benefit of our residents and our community as a whole.

You have seen that lottery commercial where the two people wake up every day and yell, "It's Payday". Well, that is how I feel when I wake up every morning and realize I am the Mayor of this great city. My "payday," if you will, is working with you and enjoying the comradery of this Council and seeing the thoughtful work you all put into your representation of your constituents and this City. It also feels like a "payday" to work alongside this wonderful team of professionals we refer to as staff. So, when I look around us, and I mean the region we live in, I see that we truly are a First Class City.

Thank you.