

ANNUAL PROGRAMS AND PRIORITIES

“State of the City” – Columbia, Missouri

By:

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As provided in our City Charter, I am submitting Programs and Priorities to the Mayor, Council and citizens of Columbia. Some of the major responsibilities of the City Manager are to prepare annual Program and Priorities, an annual budget and regular City Council meeting agendas. I have traditionally presented this annual report which is sometimes referred to as Columbia’s “State of the City” prior to the annual Council retreat which allows an opportunity for the Council to discuss their priorities for our City. The Mayor and Council were provided a copy last evening and the retreat is scheduled for May 20th and 21st.

This report is being carried live on the Columbia Channel which broadcasts on MediaCom Channel 13 and Charter Communications Channel 2 and will be rebroadcast several times. A copy is available on the City website, www.GoColumbiaMo.com and a copy will be made available at the Columbia Public Library. It will also be included in our annual City Budget, and City Source newsletter distributed on a monthly basis. I appreciate the press being here today to help communicate this information to the public. Following this presentation, I will be available to answer any questions regarding these Programs and Priorities or City government.

In addition to presenting Programs and Priorities, I will be commenting on our “State of the City”, our strategies, Citizen Survey, and accomplishments.

Columbia is a city of about 91,000 residents and continues to grow at an annual rate of between one and two percent. Our geographic area is about 59 square miles and continues to expand with voluntary annexation. During the last year, there were 24 voluntary annexation requests handled by our City Council which added approximately two square miles. Numerous businesses were expanded or added and additions made to the University and other institutions. A substantial number of jobs have been created and many retirees have moved to our city. This past year, 2,085 dwelling unit permits were issued with 1,126 for single-family homes. Our consultants, in their draft findings of a Citizen Survey just being completed, show that about 30 percent of our residents have lived in Columbia 20 years or more and 28 percent for five years or less. We welcome new residents to our city.

Columbia is what I frequently refer to as a “full service” city, providing a comprehensive range of services to our residents with an annual budget of about \$277 million and 1,168 full time employees. Our city provides a total transportation system including an airport, transit/paratransit service, short line railroad with a transload center; vehicle and pedestrian facilities whose objective is to meet the needs of all our residents. Columbia provides utilities such as water, electric, wastewater, solid waste and stormwater management. We have a great parks system and recreation programs, along with a Cultural Affairs Office which is frequently cited as enhancing the quality of life in our city.

One of the major responsibilities of the City Manager's position is to prepare an annual City budget and administer the final budget approved by the City Council. The budget is our financial plan which helps implement issues included in our statement of Programs and Priorities. A financially balanced budget and one that balances the needs of all the residents of our community is a priority. Financing our City government primarily comes from sales tax, payment in lieu of tax from electric and water utilities, gross receipts tax, property tax, user fees and other lesser sources. Six months into our fiscal year, total revenues for our city are slightly higher than projected and expenditures are slightly lower.

The Council appointed independent auditors and the Finance Advisory Committee have reported our City remaining in a financially sound position. We have excellent bond ratings and recent interest rates charged for the sale of bonds last month were very competitive. No items for correction were indicated in the Auditor's management letter. The City of Columbia continues to receive the "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award" and the "Certificate of Achievement Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting" through the Government Finance Officers' Association.

Other city resources include donations of time and funds raised through our innovative Share the Light Program, Utility Check-off Program, City Trust Programs, New Century fund and the many volunteers who support our city. This past year, over 40,000 volunteer hours valued at about \$705,000 were donated. Substantial funds were raised through our Utility Check-off Program and Trust funds.

Columbia continues to have high national rankings. Comments made by residents at City Council and other public meetings, along with communications received testify to the excellent quality of life of our city. The Citizen Survey, being completed, shows 84% of our residents indicated they were satisfied with the quality of life in Columbia. Only 3% were not, with 13% neutral. The area of primary concern continued to be traffic management and street maintenance which are similar to results of our survey two years ago.

We Columbians have many things to be grateful for. We are a city that celebrates diversity. We continue to have a strong local economy with a low unemployment rate. There are many major family events such as athletic tournaments, Show-Me State Games (the largest state games in the country), major sporting events, Memorial Day Weekend, graduation from our educational institutions, cultural and social events that bring thousands of visitors and guests to our city. We have great educational and medical facilities and are an important regional center for employment, shopping, social services, entertainment, recreation, cultural and other events. As indicated earlier, we are a fiscally sound city.

My highest priority continues to be maintaining and enhancing City services, programs and projects that help make our city one of the top places to live, work and raise a family. To remain vibrant will require the continued efforts of all of our residents.

I want to thank our professional city staff and residents who have and are serving our city, particularly those who have volunteered to serve as Mayor and City Councilpersons, serve on Boards and Commissions and on various task forces.

Next are the eight important strategies for our city. This will be followed by the City Manager's annual Program and Priorities.

Eight Important Strategies

- Assure our City's Comprehensive Planning remains current
- Identify and address major challenges and opportunities
- Maintain and strengthen our central City of Columbia.
- Plan for the orderly growth of our City from the inside outward
- Provide sufficient community resources to carry out programs and priorities
- Continue to maintain and improve existing infrastructure; provide for new infrastructure as required
- Continue to deliver services and programs in a timely cost effective manner
- Maintain proactive two-way communication with our residents and community partners

Major Elements of Comprehensive Plan

- Fire Station Master Plan
- Columbia Regional Airport Master Plan 1989
- Parks, Recreation and Open space Master Plan
- Metro Greenbelt/Trail Plan
- City Sidewalk Plan
- City Bicycle Plan
- City of Columbia Land Use Plan – Metro 2020
- Major Thoroughfare Plan
- Consolidated Plan (HUD Housing)
- Long Range Transit Plan
- Paratransit Plan
- Long Range Electrical Distribution
- Planning Report on Wastewater Collection and Treatment
- Long Range Water System Study

Meet the Transportation Needs of the City

Priorities for upcoming year

- **Present Transportation Financing plan to our voters on November ballot**
- **Complete design and contract renovation/additions to the Wabash Station**
- **Complete East Broadway construction, from Old 63 to US 63**
- **Finalize design and development of Route 763 widening in north-central Columbia**
- **Complete Route 740 Corridor Study from US63 to I-70 East**
- **Improvements to Stadium Boulevard Corridor, I-70 to Broadway, and determine best funding alternative**
- **Plan for the construction of a US63/Gans Road Interchange**
- **Plan for an I-70/Scott Blvd interchange**
- Update city master sidewalk plan and review policies such as ADA for sidewalk construction/maintenance
- Plan for adding additional parking spaces north of Broadway
- Continue expansion of the Colt railroad operations
- Continue to promote air service at Columbia Regional Airport
- Prioritize sidewalk and pedway needs

Accomplishments this past year

- **Council adopted updated right-of-way, street, sidewalk and pedway standards**
- **Completed construction of Garth Avenue to Blueridge, Roger Wilson Drive extension, Brown School Road and Worley Street sidewalks**
- **Presented a new list of priority transportation projects to MoDOT**
- **Contracted for design and construction; Green Meadows Road, East Broadway, Donnelly Avenue, Blue Ridge Road and Fifth and Cherry Street sidewalks**
- **Completed airport runway and taxiway pavement repairs**
- **Completed design concept: Scott Blvd – Rollins Road to Brookview Terrace, Chapel Hill Road – Scott Blvd to Gillespie Bridge Road, and Vandiver Drive from US 63 intersection to Mexico Gravel**
- **Applied for and received \$2.5M earmark grant for Wabash Station renovations through efforts of Senator Bond**
- **Increased funding for street overlay by \$200,000 to improve street maintenance**
- **Applied for and received over \$800,000 for transit improvements through efforts of Congressman Hulshof**

Provide for Public Health and Safety Needs

Priorities for upcoming year

- **Complete renovations to Fire Stations 1 and 2 thus completing projects from last ballot issue**
- **Include financing additional fire station and apparatus needs on November ballot**
- **Purchase two new fire station sites – South and East Columbia**
- **Continue to place high priority on traffic safety**
- **Revise public health strategic plan and begin preparation for department accreditation**
- Construct replacement fire station in south Columbia
- Review alternatives for police training facility and firing range
- Upgrade 911 telephone system
- Continue to update Emergency Operations Plan and completion of exercises

Accomplishments this past year

- **Placed a high priority on emergency preparedness/homeland security training. 75 city, county, university and community representatives participated in a full scale exercise at the FEMA Training Institute in Maryland**
- **Purchased one fire station site**
- **Added traffic unit in CPD, portable and permanent radar units and downtown timers**
- Implemented a specialized Fire Department management information system (RHAVE)
- Implemented Police Department strategic plan including a performance appraisal system related to community policing

Provide for the Renovation and Addition to Downtown City Office Space

Priorities for upcoming year

- **Begin construction to rehabilitate the Howard and Gentry Buildings**
- **Set public hearing for renovation and addition to Daniel-Boone Building**
- **Purchase remaining ground in Daniel-Boone Building Block**
- Rent additional office space to reconsolidate the Water and Light and Police Departments
- Rent additional space for overcrowding/construction work on Daniel-Boone Building

Accomplishments this past year

- **Opened new Health Facility allowing renovation of Howard Building**
- **Completed plans and specifications to rehabilitate the Howard and Gentry Buildings**
- Selected architect for Wabash Station

Address Major Parks and Recreation Requirements

Priorities for upcoming year

- **Update priority capital needs for Parks and Recreation**
- **Work toward joint facilities for the Farmer's Market and city recreation facilities on the old Fairgrounds property**
- **Consider extension of 1/8% Parks Sales tax on the November ballot**
- **Complete purchases of property to develop a regional southeast park**
- **Determine the city's role and priority for the development of the Atkins/Fairground park area**
- **Complete Phase I and plan for Phase II development of Stephens Park project**
- **Complete an environmental cleanup at Flat Branch Area and construct underground walkway for MKT trail at Stewart and Providence**

Accomplishments this past year

- **Acquired approximately 77 acres of Philips property and a lake for a regional Southeast park**
- **Completed initial stages of Stephens Park project. Dedication set for June 26, 2005**
- **Completed the construction of two new softball fields at the Antimi Youth Ballfield Complex. The two fields began being used for organized league play in April of 2005**
- **Initiated construction of High Pointe Neighborhood Park. Completed installation of the playground and the perimeter trail**
- **Provided a meaningful work and educational experience for approximately 180 at-risk youth through the CARE program. Through a cooperative grant funded program with HDC, placed 38 in-school youth in jobs during the school year**
- Updated finance plan for future implementation of Parks and Rec Master Plan
- Completed installation of the irrigation system and the strip-sodding of the fairways with zoysia turf at the L. A. Nickell Golf Course
- Developed guidelines for and implemented the Department's first financial assistance program for adults
- Relocated the "Pop Collins Cabin" to Nifong Park and completed the majority of the restoration required to return the cabin to a quality condition
- Expanded the Douglass Park Moonlight Hoops program

Growth Issues

Priorities for upcoming year

- **Continue strategy to promote orderly expansion from the inside outward**
- **Continue policy of voluntary annexation including improved coordination with Boone County**
- **Continue to recruit quality business/industry and work with partners towards construction of technology incubator, office and technology park**
- **Coordinate with Boone County Commission to standardize financing, development policies and standards in an expanded urbanizing area around Columbia**
 - a. **Review projected land use in urbanizing area**
 - b. **Plan required future roadways**
 - c. **Street, sidewalks, stormwater and pedway standards**

Accomplishments this past year

- **Revised procedures and requirements for planned zoning districts**
- **Worked towards increased cooperation with Boone County on annexation issues**
- **Completed comprehensive Grindstone basin sewer agreement with Regional Sewer District**
- **Completed 24 voluntary annexations adding about 2 square miles to our city**

Utilities and Services

Priorities for upcoming year

- **Review and adopt master plan for wastewater collection and treatment**
- **Plan for additional cell at the landfill giving consideration to bio-reactor technology (accelerated decomposition of refuse)**
- **Develop plan for long term power supply needs, including green power**
- **Review and implement, where appropriate, the recommendations from the storm water task force, particularly in the Hinkson Creek basin**
- Review proposals for the sale of methane gas at the sanitary landfill to use as a fuel source
- After public review and discussion, implement underground electric policy for new developments
- Complete water plant expansion and contract for construction of second 36" water transmission main from water plant to city

Accomplishments this past year

- **Currently purchasing renewable energy from St. Louis landfill**
- **Completed undergrounding electric utilities on 5th Street; next project is Business Loop**
- **Integrated and coordinated our electric system with regional power grid (MISO)**
- **Contracted for expansion of water treatment plant from 24 mgd to 36mgd**

Communications

Priorities for upcoming year

- **Review results and implement strategies from the citizen survey as the city budget allows**
- Implement on-line building permit, court fees and fines and other interactive applications on the city's web site
- Publish an Annual Report

Accomplishments this past year

- **Completed implementation of on-line utility payment options**
- **Conducted a second comprehensive city-wide survey**
- Reviewed city policies and protocols to insure compliance with new open records legislation

Other Major Accomplishments for 2005

- Hired Planning and Development Director
- Adopted Convention and Visitor's Bureau Master Plan Revision
- Completed a new consolidated plan to guide the allocation of CDBG and home funds over the next five years
- Reviewed and revised overtime categories for classification and pay plans to comply with federal changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act
- Wastewater Utility – continued wastewater and water main rehab work from 5 year ballot issue plan
- Contracted for other road projects: Rowe Lane cul-de-sac, Southhampton Drive design, Business Loop 70 Sidewalk from Creasy to Garth Avenue

Other Major Priorities for 2006

- Hire a Public Works Director
- Complete Green Meadows Road from Providence to Grindstone
- Begin Southhampton extension north to Route AC, Blue Ridge Road improvement
- Continue construction of required trunk sewers, rehabilitation work, and neighborhood replacement projects
- Continue adding recycling equipment at our Material Recovery Facility
- Construct Meredith Branch detention facility
- Continue placing emphasis on traffic management and street maintenance programs
- Continue programs and projects to strengthen the central business district area including museum area, Avenue of the Columns, street signage, sidewalks and benches
- Continue to promote volunteer opportunities with the city and gifts
- Continue to pursue grant funding
- Continue emphasis on affordable housing
- Continue funding and implementing 1% for the arts projects
- Continue to fund, monitor and assist the network of social services in our community at the \$800,000 plus level
- Continue to upgrade the central neighborhoods utilizing the neighborhood response team
- Place additional emphasis on coordinating and providing summer youth employment opportunities
- Complete the restoration of the MLK Jr. Memorial

Summary of Major Top Priorities

- X Continue providing for a financially balanced budget and one that balances the needs of all the residents of our community.
- X Prioritize transportation projects and present financing plan to the voters in November.
- X Prioritize public safety projects and present to the voters in November.
- X Prioritize Park projects and present to the voters in November.
- X Begin construction to renovate the Howard and Gentry Buildings and set public hearing for renovation and addition to Daniel Boone Building.
- X Complete purchase of property for development of the southeast regional park.
- X Review and adopt Master Plan update for wastewater collection and treatment.
- X Work toward removing traffic congestion and increase emphasis on road maintenance.
- X Develop plan for long term power supply needs including green power.
- X Add additional “cell” at the landfill giving consideration to bio-reactor technology.