



# STATE OF THE CITY 2019

May 29, 2019

John Glascock, Interim City Manager



## Introduction

Good morning. I'm Interim City Manager John Glascock and I'm pleased to present the 2019 State of the City. Thank you for joining us.

- My background is in solving problems one on one and being prepared for the next role. I can tell you getting up and doing a State of the City is foreign to me. So please bear with me as I present what I believe are the City's priorities.
- I am honored the City Council has entrusted me to lead the staff in the role of interim city manager until a permanent city manager is chosen.
- It's been a year of change.
- We are embarking on a new era, one that includes embracing authenticity, openness, honest communication and facing issues head-on.
- **Working together, we can** find community-acceptable solutions to the challenges we face as a City and community.
- Innovation can drive our success and we welcome new and fresh ideas.

## Citizen Survey

Each year we ask you to give us feedback on how you feel we're doing. The citizen survey helps us see what we are doing well and what needs improvement.

- We know that most people are happy with living here -- 79% of respondents were satisfied with the overall quality of life in the City.
- And most people are pleased with what we provide to the community -- 75% were satisfied with the overall quality of services provided by the City.
- However, we know improvements can be made -- the major categories of City services that residents thought were most important for the City to provide were public safety services and the condition of City streets.
- **Working together, we can** address the concerns of our residents and make our community better.

## HR/Compensation of Staff

But to address the major categories brought forth in the citizen survey, we must first take care of our core -- our employees are the most important asset the City has.

- The City of Columbia hired Paypoint HR consultants to review our Classification and Compensation of all the City's employment positions
- Most of the City's compensation, when compared to the market data for certain positions, is below market compensation.
- Employee turnover has been increasing over the past several years.
- Our team members who have dedicated themselves to public service are overworked, underpaid and are often covering more than one job because they are short-staffed.
- When we lose the skills and knowledge of our employees, it's not just an internal issue, the community also sees the impact.
- I have tremendous respect for the work that we perform as a team and **working together, we can** make our employees feel valued again.
- As part of our employee engagement survey process, we have consultants meeting right now with employees to gather their honest input about how we can make things better.
- We will have action plans to make improvements for our staff members.
- At the June 10 Council Budget Work Session, employees are at the top of the agenda to make them a priority and discuss pay equity.

## Public Safety

For at least the past five years on the citizen survey, our residents have ranked public safety as the number one priority.

- It's a new era at the Columbia Police Department -- I chose Interim Chief Geoff Jones to fill the leadership position because I know he understands the importance of open and transparent communications, both with his officers and the community.
- We've talked a lot about community oriented policing over the past several years and Interim Chief Jones and I agree -- community policing is just good policing. It's a philosophy that is lived every day in police work.
- We take transparency seriously! We want to be upfront about things like the Vehicle Stop Report. We have improvements to make, and we are working regularly with community stakeholders to give the community ALL information about their police department.
- **Together, we can** create relationships with police officers and community members that have a foundation of trust and open communication.
- Also, the Columbia Fire Department is in the beginning process of siting two new fire stations: one in the southwest part of the city and one on the eastern side of the city.
- The Columbia Fire Department is newly accredited. This is elite status for fire departments in general, as very few achieve international accreditation.

## Roads

The condition of City streets rose to be the second most important service on the citizen survey last year. Columbia's street infrastructure is critical to the operation of the City.

- The replacement cost of Columbia's 1,375 lane miles of streets is estimated at more than \$575 million.
- Current funding levels are better than historic levels but are still approximately \$2.1 million per year below what is necessary to maintain a high-quality driving surface for all streets.
- MoDOT maintains several main roads through Columbia, and they are also facing funding challenges.
- Even though our road programs are underfunded, we are doing what we can to preserve the life of our streets.
- We assess the condition of our streets and create guides like the Pavement Management Plan to address deteriorating streets in the short term and improve the integrity and life of the streets in the long term.
- Street supervisors are now assigned certain streets, which empowers them and their teams to take ownership of those roads and have more pride in their work.
- In addition to the roads within the City limits, we also need to consider that we rely on being connected. **Together, we can** support the I-70 Missouri River Bridge Project because I-70 is the lifeline to Columbia, and it's how we receive goods and services.

## Current Financial Snapshot of the City

Our community entrusts staff with their tax money to provide services they want and need. I have high standards for fiscal responsibility, and I work to set the example for the rest of our departments to strive for efficiency and stewardship.

- Tax revenues have continually been down or flat, and we still don't have a use tax in place.
- However, our main issue is that the growth of our community is outpacing the revenue we are bringing in.
- To adjust, we are improving our agility so we can react to our budget needs. More information about the financials will be discussed at the June 10 Council Budget Work Session, which is open to the public and I invite all of you to attend.
- We are also being mindful about finding ways to be more efficient. A new internal auditor was hired in February and she has already delivered an audit report to City Council with recommendations for improvement.
- While we work through our financial obstacles, we are encouraged by the fact that we remain the fourth largest city in Missouri and we are the fastest growing.
- Our unemployment rate remains consistently below 3%, and growing businesses like Aurora Organic Dairy and American Outdoor Brands are adding more employment opportunities for our community members paying at or above the Boone County Average Wage.
- **Together, we can** improve our financial conditions and continue growing our community to be economically strong.

## Strategic Plan Update

In our progress forward we look to our vision, mission and core values to guide us.

- With those guides in mind, we are making progress towards our next Strategic Plan.
- Team members are currently doing the background work to create a solid foundation for our next planning process.
- Our Strategic Plan should be a dynamic philosophy that is baked into the City staff's DNA, not just a document that we point too. We want to make sure it focuses on our key objectives, which will always include input from the community.
- **Together, we can** create a vision that will guide our staff and community members to a prosperous and inclusive future.

## Closing

In closing, I want to again express my thanks to the City Council for allowing me to provide stability in this interim period. I want to thank the wonderful staff members we have working for the City for embracing my leadership. And I want to thank our community members for making Columbia a place where people want to be. **Working together, we can** ensure that our city truly is a community where everyone has equal opportunities, the very best of City services, and a place where everyone can live, work, learn and play.