

## 2017 – 2018 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

It is with great pride that I stand before you today on behalf of the City Council and our dedicated City staff to give the second annual State of the City Address of our beloved City of Fayetteville, Georgia.

Tonight I share a newly formed Strategic Plan that will help guide the city toward its major goals over the next 3-5 years.

Although this Strategic Plan has not been officially adopted, I am highlighting several critical elements of the plan to give you a snapshot of the dedication, collaboration, and synergism of the Council and the staff as we work to make Fayetteville's future an exciting time that we can all be proud of.

We've received invaluable input from many members of our community and from our leadership team to create this plan.

In 2017 nearly 300 citizens participated in our Comprehensive Plan interactive sessions to breath life into the ideas around how the City should be organized and developed. Their input and vision for the future is the foundation on which we build for a better, Fayetteville community.

Given that the City is on the precipice of a robust growth cycle, during the recent City Council retreat, we developed a new City vision statement. This statement is meant to act as a "north star" or directional point for the next 10 to 15 years.

We carefully chose these words and believe that they express the desire for innovation and growth, while maintaining the need to keep the city welcoming and vibrant for all to enjoy.

### OUR VISION

***Fayetteville shall be a city of innovation and opportunity that fosters a vibrant and welcoming community for all.***

## **MISSION**

The 150+ employees of the City's administrative team have a daily mission to accomplish as they seek to do their part to reach the vision.

The organizational culture that we are pursuing, is one that is engaging, collaborative, and progressive which will lead to improved overall performance resulting in better service delivery to our community.

The City administrative team and City Council and all of our City-related boards will diligently work to function in a way that reflects positively on the City. The values we will use to make decisions and guide our behavior are:

**We promise to be responsive...**

- o City team members will consistently exhibit superior customer service by providing timely and effective responses to inquiries.

**We promise to act as one team...**

- o We will work as a team by using individual skills and actions to provide efficient and cost-effective services.

**We promise to act with integrity...**

- o Our decision-making (and actions) will adhere to a framework of high moral and ethical standards.

**We promise to be fully accountable....**

- o Individuals and teams will accept responsibility for outcomes entrusted to them.

The City of Fayetteville is in the early stages of a new phase of growth largely initiated with the establishment of Pinewood Studios and even more recently, the housing community known as Pinewood Forest.

The impact of the Pinewood projects along with the inherent charm and place of Fayetteville and the development of new and various types of housing and other businesses is impetus for the City to clearly define its near-term strategic direction

The 3-5-year strategic focus areas for Fayetteville are largely in response to the spoken needs of our growing community.

Through town hall meetings and other means of getting citizen inputs, we have heard what the citizens' desires are; they want a vibrant, safe, downtown with parks and WALKABILITY. They want a sense of place.

We have heard you say that you want chef-driven restaurants and activities in the downtown square for families and other amenities that contribute to an improved quality of life. You have spoken and we have heard you loud and clear.

However, we want to ensure that City infrastructure and quality of life are protected and maintained so the future development can take place in a progressive, efficient, fiscally sound and orderly manner.

The City will expend extra resources, time and focus on the following four key strategic areas over the next 3-5 years.

Fayetteville is fortunate to have a wide array of strengths that make it special. As a city, we will leverage and protect these attributes because it is what makes our city unique and attractive.

- **Established downtown identity:** We should focus on ways to leverage our charming downtown.
- **Competent and motivated staff:** We should ensure that we maintain a staff that is motivated to efficiently and effectively carry out their goals.

**WE BELIEVE WE HAVE AN EXCELLENT AND HIGHLY PROFICIENT STAFF AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO TRAIN AND BUILD UPON THIS TEAM OF PROFESSIONALS.**

- **Mutual cooperation and respect with Council and Staff:** We should actively foster strong bonds between leadership teams.
- **Fiscal Competency:** Our financial management team has won numerous awards and recognition for exemplary fiscal management and we will continue to be smart in how we leverage resources and be great stewards of the Citizen taxes.
- **Location:** We are fortunate to be located in an enviable part of the state near the airport and major highways and we intend to capitalize on this enviable fact.

The four major strategic focus areas for the City where extra time, resources and attention will be paid include:

- Transportation improvements
- Infrastructure improvements
- Improve our neighborhoods and Increase our Housing Inventory
- Develop a more assertive economic development program

## **INVEST IN TRANSPORTATION**

***WE WILL INVEST NOW TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND FUTURE TRAFFIC ISSUES AND IMPROVE WALKABILITY OPTIONS***

*Fayetteville's road systems, trails and sidewalk systems are important to the current state of the city as well as the future. Since the city is experiencing growth it is even more important that the city invests in basic services including quality roads and pedestrian and multi-use trail systems – to maintain the charm and opportunity we all desire.*

**Top Projects we will consider related to this Strategic Focus area are:**

- Conduct a traffic study
- Secure funding for much needed road maintenance
- Develop a trail system to connect three major points of the city
- Increase the downtown Streetscape
- Increase walkability (signals, sidewalks, paths)
- Improved communications to citizens on transportation issues
- Develop and consider ordinance requiring subdivision connections
- Hood Road Bridge
- Increase roundabouts to aid in traffic flow
- Consider expanding path network and path width

## **DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

### ***WE WANT TO STIMULATE AND RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES***

*The Fayetteville economy is strong and getting stronger. We are privileged to have several vibrant anchor businesses in our community. In the last year there has been an increase in development in our community. Our goal in this development is to properly assist those who want to develop and grow our city and to do it in a way that preserves the charm and personality of the city.*

*While there is tremendous growth, we must improve some of our older retail shops and shopping facilities, and when needed provided incentives to make such redevelopment possible*

*Given the recent number of large anchor stores that have closed in the Fayetteville Pavilion, we must develop a plan to repurpose and reinvigorate the use of this facility.*

**Top Projects related to this Strategic Focus area:**

- Build a New Municipal Government Complex or City Center
- Improve code enforcement (hold those who violate our city ordinances accountable)
- Business retention and recruitment (including small business support and service referrals)
- Review Policies & procedure on how we engage with businesses

## **PROTECT AND GROW INFRASTRUCTURE**

### ***WE WILL INVEST NOW IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT PLANNED GROWTH AS WELL AS CURRENT DEMAND***

*Our water and sewer infrastructure is limited in that it can only serve a certain number of citizens. In addition, it is aging and in the near future may not be able to provide the quality services our citizens and businesses need. We must, therefore, make smart investments in our roads and utilities so that future growth and current customers can be served with reliable services.*

**Top Projects related to this Strategic Focus area:**

- Estimate business for maintenance & upgrades
- Adjust rates (Water/sewer) to cover additional capital improvements
- Evaluate & assess costs for sewer repairs (annexation plan/capacity)

# IMPROVING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

*Our water and sewer infrastructure is limited in that it can only serve a certain number of citizens*

## Top Projects related to this Strategic Focus area:

- Study and assess HOA detention ponds and support capacity
- Improve public notices / communication to neighborhoods (NextDoor, social media, use of the city website)
- Establish a Neighborhood Advisory Board

**We conducted a SWOT Analysis as part of our Strategic Planning process and identified several areas that could become threats or hindrances to our development and growth. We will work as a team to overcome these challenges and engage the public along the way.**

- ***Funding:*** *A key threat to our success is making wise decisions about how to fund some of the desired goals.*
- ***Millage increase:*** *Given that our millage rate is comparatively low, we may choose to increase it for a period of time to help fund strategic items like public safety staffing and initiatives along with Town Center City Hall and green space area.*
- ***Need for more internal processes and procedures:*** *We will continue to develop and improve processes and procedures in each department so we can better serve citizens and others.*
- ***Perception of crime:*** *We must and will take actions to change the mindset about Fayetteville's crime rate as it is factually not as high as the perception currently is. The latest Safewise study has us as the 21<sup>st</sup> safest city in Georgia.*

**PUBLIC SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR GROWING CITY.**

*WE ARE INTENTIONALLY BEING PROACTIVE IN DEVELOPING CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND PRODUCTIVE COMMUNITY POLICING.*

*WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO COMPLETELY STOP CRIME FROM AFFECTING OUR COMMUNITY BUT OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT IS BEING EQUIPPED AND MANNED WITH QUALITY PROFESSIONALS WHO WILL PURSUE CRIMINALS UNTIL THEY ARE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE.*

*OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO GROW AND HIRE HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS.*

*WE WERE RECENTLY AWARDED A FEDERAL SAFER GRANT WHICH ALLOWED OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT TO HIRE TWELVE NEW FIRE PERSONNEL. WE ALSO PURCHASED A NEW FIRE TRUCK IN 2017 AND HAVE ORDERED TWO MORE TRUCKS THAT WILL ARRIVE IN 2018.*

*THE INVESTMENT IN OUR FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM HAS RESULTED IN THE CITY RECEIVING AN IMPROVED PUBLIC PROTECTION RATING FROM THE INSURANCE SERVICE OFFICE. THIS RATING CAN BE A FACTOR IN ESTABLISHING FIRE INSURANCE RATES FOR OUR CITIZENS AND BUSINESS OWNERS.*

We have several key weaknesses that we must address in order to thrive as a community but we are working to overcome these weaknesses

***Aging infrastructure:*** *In order to thrive long-term, we must invest in growing, protecting and maintaining our infrastructure.*

***Lack of workforce housing:*** *In order to address the need to attract the workforce that is needed in a growing economy we must be able to provide quality housing at various price points for our residents.*

***Interaction with other local government agencies:***

*We need to work to improve relationships with other governmental agencies near us such as Fayette County Schools and Fayette County Administration and Board of Commissioners, so our achievements will be mutually beneficial.*

***Non-competitive salaries:*** *To attract and retain highly skilled and dedicated City employees needed to advance the City, we need to consider ways to better compensate our employees.*

I said this last year and I reiterate it tonight, we cannot afford to maintain a status quo and watch surrounding communities surpass our economic development and managed-growth efforts. We must press forward in our efforts to deter crime. We must continue to set the pace for high educational standards. We must aggressively pursue and attract quality businesses through a robust economic development plan.

Tonight, I once again encourage all citizens of Fayetteville to get involved in your community. Get involved through volunteerism, through public service and through constructive communication and dialouge. Become active guardians of our democracy, and take pride in our unique city.

In summary, the city of Fayetteville is on a great trajectory for improving quality of life and fostering greater opportunities for more of our citizens. This next phase of growth requires a focus on the four key areas we discussed:

- Transportation improvements
- Infrastructure improvements

- Improve neighborhoods and Housing Inventory
- Develop a more assertive economic development program

The city has spoken and we are now ready to take the initial steps to reach the goals and strategic plans. But, we must be united as a team, with one voice, one mission, one purpose – all in a culture of “can-do” and excellence.

We look forward to sharing updates on our progress in these areas with citizens and businesses in the coming months both at City Council meetings as well as on our website, in our newsletter and other venues.

We value your input as stakeholders and are here to serve your best interests. Please let us know if we can help you in any way or if you have any input or ideas around how to best achieve our goals.

In closing, I would like to solicit the support from all Fayetteville citizens in helping show pride in keeping our city clean. Recently, we have noticed an increase in litter throughout the city.

Our Public Works Staff do an excellent job of street maintenance and upkeep but given the size of our city, we need business owners and conscientious citizens to help us by ensuring trash is deposited in proper receptacles and not thrown on our streets and roads.

We are asking business owners to ensure your parking lots and storefronts are periodically swept and cleaned.

As your mayor, and on behalf of the city council and city staff, I commit to you, our Fayetteville residents, that we will continue to be good stewards of all of the resources entrusted to our leadership.

Working together, we will see Fayetteville become a more vibrant and successful community where all citizens will be proud to be called residents of Fayetteville.

Close: “Thank you, and may God bless you, and may God continue to bless Fayetteville, Georgia.”