

2016 ANNUAL STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

**Mr. President, Pro Tem,
Madam Clerk,
Ms. City Attorney,
Members of the Media,
Distinguished Guests,
And Citizens of Jonesboro;**

Good morning/afternoon/evening.

As I try to do every time I rise to speak to our community, let me begin by reminding each of us how truly blessed we are here in the City of Jonesboro. As a reflection of the teamwork displayed by our city employees, the leadership of our business community, and the resolve of each and every citizen who calls

Jonesboro “home”; we have been unequivocally blessed by our Creator with his favor on this city.

In that same spirit, I would also like to say THANK YOU for allowing me to serve as your mayor. I consider this opportunity to be a blessing in and of itself. I love this city, and I cannot imagine a mayor who is more privileged than I am to be able to get up every day and work hard for a community and its citizens who mean any more to them than you do to me.

There are countless attributes that make our community so special. We are in a unique position to not only serve our local population, but to serve a much larger and more regional base. Our economy is built on our stature as the regional hub for all of Northeast Arkansas for retail, education, healthcare, entertainment, and commerce. Our strength is in our

diversity, and our success is rooted in our commitment to hard work and superior service.

But without a doubt, the most precious resource we have as a city is our people. From every walk of life, every socio-economic background; we find a way to come together, even in disagreement, to serve the greater good of our community. Nowhere is that more evident to me than with the men and women who serve you on a daily basis as employees of the City of Jonesboro.

You are fortunate to have such a talented and committed group of public servants who represent a large spectrum of individual personalities, talents, and responsibilities. Whether in uniform or not, executive or laborer; these men and women love their job and they

love their city...and it shows in the quality of work they do every day.

2015 was a year of change throughout our ranks; with retirements, relocations, and increased individual opportunities leading to several new faces in new positions. While too numerous to mention them all, each person that left us, for whatever reason, was deeply appreciated and will be sorely missed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is a tremendous privilege to report to you the State of our City is strong!

Despite the challenges and opportunities that face a growing city with the kind of responsibilities and infrastructure we have in Jonesboro, we remain a vibrant, growing, and resourceful community...a city full

of hope and optimism for our future. And with good cause!

2016 is shaping up to be a year full of promise...with the designation of Interstate 555, the scheduled opening of a new Doctor of Osteopathic Medical School, to the anticipated construction of a new Convention Center (OR TWO), to the \$300 million dollar expansion of St. Bernards Medical Center...this year is showing signs that it will earn its place as one of the most historic in our city's legacy.

But for all the promise of 2016, we must not forget that what we are actually doing is building on the foundation of an incredible history and a very successful 2015. For that reason, I have chosen the theme of "Building Jonesboro's Future." Because as much as I look forward to that future, I want us to be reminded of

the recent accomplishments that will allow us to move forward and enjoy continued growth and success.

Let's take a brief look at some of the highlights from 2015.

(GO THROUGH THE SLIDES AND HIT THE BULLET POINTS...NO NEED TO SCRIPT ANY OF THIS BECAUSE IT IS ALREADY THERE AND THE STUFF LIKE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE AWARDS AND ALEC FARMER NEEDS TO BE PERSONAL AND FROM YOUR HEART)

SLIDES HERE

As you can see, we have a lot to be proud of from 2015...and a lot to look forward to in 2016. And with each accomplishment, I have the honor as your Mayor

of being the one who gets to stand up here and talk about all the great things happening in Jonesboro.

But I never want you to think for one minute that I place any weight of these accomplishments on myself. Every good thing that happens in this community is a result of TEAMWORK...a cooperative spirit among our citizens and our government, among our business leaders and our employees, and among our elected leaders who represent us locally at the state and national level. And for that spirit, I am eternally grateful.

Once again, I would like to THANK YOU for this privilege. And in closing, I would like to challenge you to keep our city, our country, our nation, and those of us who bear the responsibility to lead in your prayers. We

covet them, we need them; and I don't know where we would be without them.

God Bless You, and God Bless this community.