

Mayor Jimmy Haley

State of the City

McMinnville is on the move! As a city, we have made much progress over the last few years, and as your Mayor, it has been my focus to concentrate on people and how to improve the services we provide our citizens, while being good stewards of the taxpayers' money.

Thanks to our investments in the future, economic development work, and fiscal responsibility, I am proud to report that our city is stronger than it has been in a long time. Last year, over 120 new business licenses were issued and \$6.5 million dollars was invested in new development. Low unemployment rates and improving financial markets have allowed us to produce some remarkable achievements, and our quest continues.

Our proactive approach to governance requires a full-time commitment to service, and our supportive Board, great city employees and community partners have exceeded that requirement. Our collective hard work has resulted in measureable progress. That positive impact of that teamwork is visible across the city. Together we tirelessly worked toward a common goal: one people, one community and one vision for a better tomorrow.

That tomorrow begins today, as we celebrate the many accomplishments for 2017 and look forward to a prosperous 2018.

We secured funding for the Advanced Robotics Training Facility that will change the face of McMinnville forever.

We expanded economic investment opportunities through the creation of a Tourism Development Board.

We took advantage of our outdoor recreation opportunities with hiking, kayaking, boating, fishing and caving adventures in order to effectively attract dollars from the thousands of tourists who flock to our beautiful natural resources.

Our Parks and Recreation Department has made major improvements to ballfields, walkways, and our wellness and sports programs.

Technology upgrades, across each department, continue to improve the quality of services we provide to our customers. On-line payments, applications and permitting have streamlined operations. A new IT Specialist is now on hand to continue much-needed upgrades and bolster our cyber security.

In the near future, I hope to continue our technological improvements by partnering with two locally-based companies, Ben Lomand Communications and LiteWire, as we continue to make McMinnville technologically-advanced and prepared for the cyber-based economy of the future.

Our Police and Fire Departments continue to make upgrades in safety and security through training, new equipment and education of our men and women in uniform. McMinnville is blessed to have so many dedicated public servants who dedicate their lives to making our city safe and prosperous.

This year, I hope to explore options on building a new police station and study how we all can reduce recidivism and develop programs that address substance abuse, so McMinnville's families can remain intact and we can end the viscous cycle that addiction inflicts on so many in our community.

Our Water Department maintains quality drinking water. Improvements in infrastructure continue as we anticipate new quality requirements and regulations from the State. Through the purchase of property next to our Bell Street Facilities, future expansion of our operations is now secure. Within the next year, we should be well on our way to moving all maintenance and storage from the Bernard Building to Bell Street.

We have added more dollars to our paving and sidewalk improvements with more funds allocated toward repair and upgrades to existing pedestrian crossings. The new sidewalk along Chancery Street will promote pedestrian safety and improve mobility for those without adequate transportation.

Amazingly, we have done all of this without raising taxes and while maintaining a hefty fund balance. Together, we have ensured the next generation of McMinnville residents and leaders are positioned to continue to bring prosperity and progress to our great city.

Our future is bright. The national and state economies are growing and McMinnville continues to prosper...growing jobs and investment opportunities without increasing the size of government.

Economic development and diversified investment is the key to our prosperity...the number of new restaurants and retail establishments attest to that success. We successfully recruited a new Hardee's, Zaxaby's and Captain D's as well as many local shops and cafés including the Cumberland Biscuit Company and the Club House at Smooth Rapids. Expanding business opportunities increase the number of entrepreneurs, create new jobs, and keep money here at home. A special thanks to all who have invested in our community. New hope in McMinnville's future has inspired greater opportunity and prosperity for all our citizens.

But, our work is far from finished. For 2018, there is much more to come:

Our goal must continue to be utilizing our resources responsibly without putting a burden on our taxpayers. That takes vision and planning. To aid in that quest, a strategic plan for the entire city is being developed through a grant to provide a road map for future success and growth.

A grant writer has been placed in our budget to help finance new projects and fund capital improvements across the city.

To comply with required ADA upgrades, the City will implement necessary upgrades to all our buildings and facilities, including our aging Civic Center Complex. There, major renovations will bring it up to code and provide expanded services for the wellness and health of McMinnvillians for years to come. Through community partnerships, we are exploring the option of an indoor pool and recreation center that will provide water therapy and rehab services.

Furthermore, expansion of tax credits through the newly created Tourism Development Board, the PILOT Program, our State Adventure Tourism designation and a proposed TIF District will help recruit more

business and industry across the city. With three possible hotel proposals in the making, one of which involves the Blue Building, McMinnville should be able to provide accommodations to the many travelers who visit our area each year.

Another area for optimism is Cumberland Caverns Live. We are all excited about RCS Production's new music venue in the cave to replace the successful Bluegrass Underground series. We hope to continue negotiations as the city explores our options for underwriting this exciting production series.

We will continue to work with the State government to secure funding for our Driver Services Center, and find grants and programs that will aid our efforts to continue the progress we are seeing in our city.

Unfortunately, rural communities will continue to face struggles to compete with large urban centers, but if we implement tools that build on the successes we have already created, we will grow a better tomorrow for all of us. It has to be a team effort as we cooperate with our Federal, State and Local partners to deliver the promise of a prosperous future!

To quote President John F. Kennedy, who gave inspiration to a whole generation of new leaders that went on to shape America's future: "We are partners for progress; to improve...is the task of us all."

Thank you citizens for embracing our vision...because of you, the future is bright.

Thank you to the Board of Aldermen. Without your hard work and belief in investing in our future, none of our success would have been possible. Let's continue to work together to make McMinnville the greatest city in the nation.

On a personal note, serving this community has been and continues to be the privilege of my life. I wake up everyday proud to serve and eager to leave McMinnville better than I found it. I am honored that the community I love has placed their trust in me.

God Bless the City of McMinnville.

God Bless the State of Tennessee.

And, God Bless the United States of America.