

2020 State of the City

February 25, 2020

Welcome to the annual State of the City Address.

I want to start by offering a special thank you to the Wylie Chamber of Commerce for once again hosting this event, and to Linebarger for sponsoring today's luncheon.

Thank you to Gabe McQuade, for playing the National Anthem on his saxophone. Gabe is a junior and member of the Wylie East High School Band, and he was selected this year to participate in the State Band.

Thanks to the Wylie East High School Jr. ROTC Saber Team, to Wylie Fire Rescue Honor Guard for the presentation of the colors and to Keith Stephens for leading us in the invocation.

I want to welcome my special guests ... my father-in-law and mother-in-law, Mac and Geraldine Mathis, the first lady of Wylie and my absolute better half, Tammie.

Today, it is my honor and pleasure to deliver the 2020 State of the City Address.

And today marks the 12th and final time I will have had the honor of presenting this Address.

I also honored to officially be serving as the longest continually serving Mayor in our city's 132-year history.

What makes Wylie, Wylie?

We are so fortunate to live in a growing city with a population of now over 53,000 people ... my goal, as the head of the legislative branch of our local government, was to build on our strengths.

To let *Wylie to be Wylie*...to follow the mission statement laid out by our City Council from years ago...

Honoring our past; Embracing our present; Planning our future

Remember, the railroad started this town, years later onions became a big deal ... but how do we define ourselves today?

How do we continue to be that suburb in the Metroplex that doesn't realize we are a suburb?

There are a number of ways we do this...

We have a historic downtown district, because of the efforts of our Assistant City Manager Renae Ollie, back when she was the Planning Director, who recognized the importance of preserving our downtown.

It's because when we have had issues with our trash, we've had Assistant City Manager Brent Parker on the phone all hours of the night and day, trying to get CWD, our solid waste provider, out here to pick it up ... while at the same time overseeing the construction of the Public Safety Building.

It's because we have a City Manager Chris Holsted who took over the reins last May and jumped in with both feet, reaching out to businesses, faith-based organizations, and the school district to build stronger relationships with our community ... to start earlier with the budget cycle to try and get direction from the city council, because he knew, the growing trend ... that even though the city had lowered taxes over the last seven years ... that still wasn't good enough in the eyes of some people.

Wylie Fire Rescue

It's, because we have an ISO-1 rated Fire Department led by our home grown chief, Brandon Blythe, that answered 6,015 number of calls for help last year. They attacked 53 Structure fires, and a total of 106 fires which resulted in 1.6 million in property damage, but on the positive side ... they also prevented over 45 million from being lost ... I don't know about you that that is a pretty good return on our investment.

AND ... our 911 Emergency Communications Department, answered nearly 16,000 calls for help.

Wylie Police Department

In Wylie, Texas, CRIME continues to be run out of town. This past year, thanks to the efforts of our Police Department, led by Chief Anthony Henderson, our Crime Rate dropped 18% despite an increase in our population.

And what kind of department do we have ...

10 of our Police officers received life-saving awards

Wylie P.O.L.I.C.E. Club (Practice of Leadership, Integrity and Character Education) program for our high school students was honored by the Texas School Safety Center as part of its School Safety Spotlight Program.

The Wylie group was the winner in the Student/Peer-Led Groups and Programs category, defined as “programs that allow students to take leadership roles in creating and promoting a safe and secure school environment that encourages positive peer interaction.”

Teaming up with Wylie ISD, Wylie PD added additional crossing guards to increase safety for students at school crossings as they walk and ride their bikes to school.

I think it is important just to note ... that two of those crossing guards were added at Bush Elementary ... which is outside our city limits ... but we do it because it is the right thing to do ... you see that really is the Wylie Way.

Truett and Rita Smith Public Library:

It's the Truett and Rita Smith Public Library led by Rachel Orozco. Our library was awarded the 2019 Achievement of Excellence in Libraries Award from the Texas Municipal Library Directors Association ... now you may be thinking, "*Oh that's nice,*" but do you realize what that really means? With this honor, Smith Library is in the top 10% of all public libraries in Texas.

This past year, the library started a new program for special needs adults ages 16 and up, called Wayfinders@SPL.

This program builds upon the existing education and experience of our special needs participants by focusing on basic life skills and social interaction.

The library had another record attendance of nearly 2,100 children and adults at our Summer Kick-Off event, and again the library partnered with the Recreation Center to promote summer reading and recreation center activities.

All that, while offering over 730 programs and events this past year, that had over a quarter of a million visits from our citizens.

Our Library is an amazing place!

Parks and Recreation:

It's our Parks and Recreation Department, led by Rob Diaz that maintains the fields for over 5,000 children in our city to play T-Ball, Baseball, Softball, Soccer and Football.

They operate an award-winning recreation center, voted in by the citizens of Wylie in 2005 to encourage and build a healthy living lifestyle throughout our community. Our Rec Center was awarded the 2019 Texas Recreation and Parks Society Regional Lone Star.

In Wylie, we are covering all the bases ... the Wylie Senior Recreation Center won the 2019 Texas Recreation and Parks Society Regional Excellence in Programming Award in Senior Programming for *Rock On*.

In other words, Parks and Rec offers something for every citizen of all ages ... and just so you know ... the cost to each citizen, to provide these services to our community, would cost you about the same as ONE cup of coffee from Starbucks *each month*.

While the departments I have just talked about are the ones are most visible to the public ...t here are others, who are the "oil" that makes the engine run ... for example,

Planning and Zoning

It's our Planning and Zoning Department, led by Jasen Haskins ... that updated the Zoning Ordinances and

Subdivision Regulations in record speed after our State Legislative body decided to change numerous state laws.

While at the same time having a record number of Zoning Cases and Zoning Board of Adjustment Cases ... up about 50% over previous years

Public Works:

It's Public Works, led by Tim Porter, they work to ensure that our water and sewer systems, our sidewalks and our roads are working ... in other words, they address the basic necessities of life.

This past year, they completed the construction of a 1.0 million gallon ground storage water tank

Installed the traffic signal at the Alanis Drive and Ballard Avenue.

Began planning for the traffic signal at Hensley Lane and Woodbridge Parkway.

They also continued to collect water samples to ensure the safety of our drinking water.

They worked with TxDOT on the signal timing of our traffic lights on FM 544 and HWY 78 throughout Wylie.

I know, it's not glamorous or glitzy, but imagine a day without toilets, drinking water or stoplights.

Finance Department:

It's our Finance Department led by Melissa Beard, who for the 30th consecutive year was awarded by the "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" by the Government Finance Officers Association; and the "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award" for the 9th consecutive year.

They also maintained the Texas State Comptroller's Transparency Star for "Traditional Finances" and earned the Star for "Debt Transparency" this year.

Utility Billing added an automated phone system for better and faster customer service ... and soon we will be rolling out an "automated pay by phone" feature

And ... our Municipal Court received the 2019 Municipal Traffic Safety Initiative Award.

Human Resources

It's our Human Resources department led by Lety Yanez, who realized the need to train our employees as our city has continued to grow to make sure they have the tools to meet the needs of a growing community.

In 2019, HR began quarterly training of Active Attacker/Stop the Bleed/CPR for all employees. (We started this once another city experienced an active shooter situation.)

Today all employees receive training on how their work ties into the City Council's strategic goals and mission for the city.

It's our City Secretary's office led by Stephanie Storm, who keeps records of all our meetings ... and answers untold numbers of open records requests.

It's our Public Information Office, led by Craig Kelly, who promote Wylie at every opportunity, which led to Wylie being recognized, not once but twice as one of the top 25 places to live in the country by Money Magazine, and as the BEST place in the United State to raise a family!

And the list could go on and on of the things our city staff does to make Wylie the town it is today.

MOVE TO THE SIDE PODIUM

Today we continue with something we started two years ago, we will be giving the **Wide Awake Wylie awards** to people who embody the three elements of the city's mission statement.

Honoring our past; Embracing our present; Planning our future

Honoring our Past is the first award, and it goes to **James Wright**.

James owned Wright's Barber Shop in downtown Wylie for nearly 30 years. He was a wealth of knowledge on the history of our community ... and he was a dear friend whom I miss every day.

James is no longer with us, but he will never be forgotten. His wife Mary and some of his family are here, and I want to thank you for sharing James with us.

The second part of our mission statement says we **Embrace our Present**. And this award goes to Sam Satterwhite.

For 24 years, Sam has served our community as the Executive Director of the Wylie Economic Development Corporation.

If you question what Sam did for Wylie, all you need to do is drive around our 39 square miles of city limits and look at the industrial, commercial and retail businesses. Sam's fingerprints are all over this city.

He has done an amazing job for Wylie. BUT it wasn't just a job for him, Wylie became his home ... he served on the Wylie ISD School Board, he is a member of the Rotary Club, he hosted golf tournaments to benefit organizations like the Wylie Christian Care Center.

The third leg of our mission statement says we will **plan for our future** award goes to my wife, Tammie Hogue.

Being the Mayor's wife is not the easiest job in the world ... and be married to Eric Hogue, is also a big challenge!

I have always said it's harder on the spouse than it is for the person whose name is on the ballot.

It's hard for them sit there while their loved one gets their name run through the mud on social media or on a marquee.

BUT she has always pushed me to move forward ... and to make tomorrow a better day ... so while this may be a little selfish ... she has helped me in focusing on the future

...

USE SIDE PODIUM AS SCREEN COMES DOWN.

It has always been my goal to honor our mission, and it has been wonderful to serve as this city's Mayor.

We have put together a little video showing my journey as Wylie's Mayor.

In creating this video, Craig, Judy and myself realized a lot has happened over 12 years ... from a population of 35,000 to the over 53,000 we boast today ... during those years, I got to oversee ...

The construction of Fire Station 3, our City Hall, our Recreation Center, Our Library, Our Public Works

Building, the remodel of our Public Safety Building, the opening of the Wylie Senior Recreation Center, remodel of Founder's Park and Community Park, improvements and expansion of FM 1378, East Brown, West Brown and Woodbridge Parkway.

Additionally, we NEVER raised the taxes up to the amount the voters had approved for us to do from the 2005 Bond Package. We kept city taxes well below that amount.

AND no matter what anyone says ... WE HAVE LOWERED CITY TAXES FOR THE LAST SEVEN YEARS!

I was personally involved in working the Wylie EDC, Developers and Business Owners to bring Super Target, Kohl's, McAlister's Deli, Aldi's, Race Trac, Wylie Medical Plaza, Baylor Lake Pointe Emergency Center, Freddy's, Kroger Market Place, IHOP, Savage Precision Fabrication, B&B Theaters, Chick-fil-A, Dairy Queen and Sanden America's 24 million dollar product line.

I was honored to be the first Mayor of Wylie to address the United States House of Representatives in the U.S. Capital.

I tried to talk a former President and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom into moving to Wylie, Texas.

And I even got to do a little magic along the way...

BUT the icing on the cake was bringing home COLLIN COLLEGE!!!

As we start the video, I also encourage you to listen to words of the song. It is from the soundtrack of “The Greatest Showman” ... about the life of P.T. Barnum, famous for Barnum and Bailey Circus, and who just also happened to be a fellow Mayor!

It is entitled, *This is Me* ... and reflects on what I have always wanted for Wylie ... to just be Wylie ... to build on our strengths and to be the BEST Wylie we can be!

(Play video...after video, screen comes up)

WYLIE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Now ... let's close by spending just a few minutes talking about our Economic Development ...

Wylie Economic Development Corporation continues to focus on strengthening and developing our business base in Wylie.

Industrial, manufacturing and commercial businesses alike have decided that Wylie is THE place to be!

BUT, what does this mean for you? Strong and thriving businesses enrich our community with job opportunities, diverse dining and shopping options and infuse the local economy with property tax and sales tax support.

All good news for Wylie citizens!

In fact, **in the last 12 years**, taxable value grew by **\$2.6 Billion**.

The WEDC works closely with the City of Wylie staff and City Council to realize a long-term strategic vision for the growth of business in Wylie.

As an example, after 9 years of strategic purchases near the corner of Hwy 78 and Cooper Drive, Chick-Fil-A opened 2 years ago. They were joined this past year by Schlotzsky's and Fish-n-Tails Oyster Bar.

And – the WEDC closed on the sale of the last pad site to Whataburger last week. We anticipate that they will be open for business this fall.

Pet Supply Plus, Credit Union of Texas and BURGERim all joined Woodbridge Centre's Kroger anchored development in 2019.

Woodbridge Crossing welcomed ULTA, Sketchers, Great American Cookie Company & Marble Slab Creamery, Bath & Body Works along with the newest addition, Mod Pizza, which opened in October.

This development has been a major catalyst for retail development along that corridor which generates sales tax

revenues from shoppers, most of whom live outside our City, for the benefit of the citizens of Wylie.

Industrial and manufacturing business is also booming in Wylie as well.

Dean-ann Gourmet Popcorn expanded and consolidated its operations in Wylie, adding over 10,000 square feet to its production facility on Windco Circle.

Regency Business Park, which welcomed DCU's 10,000+ square foot facility this past year, has caught the attention of other businesses looking to relocate to Wylie.

Cardinal Strategies broke ground this fall and has plans to hire engineering professionals to expand their growing business.

And, our Historic Downtown Wylie continues to flourish and attract new businesses like Frankie's Mexican Cuisine and Bold Barbecue.

The Wylie EDC has made a major investment in property near the corner of Highway 78 and Brown, a 13-acre tract that will be redeveloped to expand the footprint of our downtown area with office, retail and restaurant space in the coming years.

Last, but not least, all eyes are focused on ***Collin College - Wylie campus***. Construction is well under way

and the campus is on track to open its doors to students in the fall of 2020.

This educational facility will draw students, professors, administrators, shoppers and diners into our community along with providing a valuable resource for businesses and citizens for years to come.

This was a dream of many of our citizens for over two decades, and it's NOW a reality!

THE FUTURE

Hopefully you can see that all of the things we have talked about today have been in the plans for years. We didn't just wake up a year or two years ago and say let's build a better Wylie.

Personally, for me, it has been an honor to help lead this community into the successful city it is today ... through our greatest decade of growth.

While you may not have agreed with every vote I have made, or every speech I have delivered, hopefully you know I have always tried to do, what I believed would help Wylie grow into a wonderful place we can call home.

Honoring our past; Embracing our present; Planning our future

From our earliest days ... through our growth ... through our changes of leadership ... through our tough times and our prosperous times ... Wylie's heart continues to beat with love and with strength ... it's the Wylie Difference ... it's the Wylie Way.

As our city moves forward, I hope we will never forget those who came before us, creating a town where there was none, improving it with each passing year, and laying the foundation for those of us who enjoy living and working here today.

And as the future becomes the present, we must keep growing forward ...

May God bless you, May God bless the United States of America, May God bless the State of Texas...

And, as always, may God continue to bless THE GREAT CITY OF WYLIE, TEXAS