

Good morning.

Thank you for joining me as I present highlights of the proposed 2019 fiscal year budget for the City of Clarksville.

For the past eight years, I have presented a detailed overview of the budget to the City Council and the citizens of Clarksville. And as I've said each year, adopting a budget is the most important task of any governmental body.

Through our budget, we provide the essential services our citizens need and deserve -- those things only governments can provide, like safe roads, well-trained public safety personnel, public infrastructure and recreational opportunities. Government also provides reliable utilities like electricity, natural gas, clean water and wastewater services, and we encourage businesses to invest in our community and partner with us to bring new opportunities to Clarksville and its citizens.

And I want to remind all citizens that for clarity and transparency, all of this budget information -- including this speech and supporting documentation, along with the detailed line item department by department budget document -- can be reviewed at www.cityofclarksville.com--the city's website.

This year, thanks to our recent progress on the Clarksville Family Athletic Complex and plans for two major new City-built thoroughfares, we are really entering a new phase in Clarksville's history. Finally, as our population moves up and up -- toward nearly 160,000 residents -- we are adding the kinds of amenities that truly are worthy of one of the biggest cities in Tennessee. We are making needed strides to improve our present and define our future!

Let me paint the picture: A few years from now, as residents and visitors travel through Clarksville on Interstate 24, at Exit 8 they will see an inviting new gateway to our community. Looking eastward, on one side of Rossvie Road, they will see the gleaming new Hankook Tire plant. On the other side, they will see the Clarksville Family Athletic Complex, with a major baseball stadium, a tournament soccer facility and other recreational assets, which could include an ice rink facility and much more. They also will see new hotels and restaurants, all geared to serve visitors to the Athletic Complex.

For me, the budget process always starts with the vision for what we want Clarksville to be; and then the budget reflects the priorities we set for how we are going to achieve that vision.

Our vision is to be the best City in America in which to live, work and raise a family.

This takes a sharp focus on our priorities, which are the capabilities that enable our economic growth and progress.

Specifically, these priorities are:

- Public safety, with well-staffed and equipped Police and Fire Rescue Departments.
- Good roads and transportation systems.
- Maintaining and improving Clarksville's exceptional quality of life, primarily with our great Parks & Recreation Department facilities and programming, our Senior Center, our Museum and our affordable housing initiatives.
- Well-managed municipal power, broadband, natural gas, water and wastewater utilities.
- A City center that promotes arts, culture, government and a thriving business economy

- Transparency and accountability in government, which means ensuring taxpayers dollars are spent to benefit every citizen fairly.

Today, I want to take this time to explain exactly how we are working on these priorities.

At the forefront of the City of Clarksville agenda in 2019 is a key quality-of-life project -- our Clarksville Family Athletic Complex at Exit 8.

After the City Council voted 8-4 last week to complete the purchase of 300-acres at Exit 8 for the Athletic Complex, the game plan is “Full Speed Ahead.”

The next step will be to close on the property. With the land purchase in place, the City will continue working toward formal contractual agreements with the Tennessee State Soccer Association and National Sports Services, the firm representing the Prospect League.

Concurrently, the City will work with Lose & Associates, the project consultant on the Athletic Complex, to expand the company’s existing contract. Lose has extensive experience in design-to-construction services on community recreation projects.

To that end, I propose adding \$100,000 in my 2019 budget to combine with the money already budgeted for the Athletic Complex project to continue the design and engineering phases of this capital project.

Lose & Associates will use a subcontractor to complete an economic impact and market analysis study. The economic and market study will consider the needs of the project partners -- TSSA and Prospect League, for example -- and the City's vision for the complex, and then define the features the Athletic Complex will need to succeed.

This study also will determine the expected operating revenues and expenses of the complex, and projections of the increased tax revenues the City can expect the complex to generate.

The results of the economic and market study will inform two important next steps:

- Preliminary design and engineering work that will determine the layout of the site.
- Decisions about the structure of the project funding plan.

Several options are possible, and the study will determine the best financial model for issuing bonds and funding the project.

The City also is scheduling meetings with the Regional Planning Director to begin the annexation process, which ideally will be coordinated with concurrent annexation requests from the City and adjacent commercial property owners.

While we are talking about recreation amenities, let me tell you about other Clarksville Parks & Recreation Department resources I'm requesting in my 2019 budget.

- We're continuing work which began with last year's budget, now with a private partner to help partially fund the project, to provide a permanent stage for the Liberty Park Amphitheater.

As many of you know, Liberty Park has a gently sloping space near the Wilma Rudolph Events Center that can be used for outdoor gatherings. But, the space has no permanent stage, no permanent electrical service, and no system for controlling crowd access.

Design of a permanent stage for this area is under way to create a performance amphitheater with lawn seating for 5,000 suitable for big-time concerts and other events. The space would be designed for rental to concert and event promoters, and much like the Wilma Rudolph Events

Center and Freedom Point, would provide a stream of income to help maintain Liberty Park and other Parks & Recreation Department assets and programming. Using facilities like Ascend Amphitheater in Nashville as a guide, we can create a spectacular Riverfront park.

- Also for 2019, we also are continuing a design and use plan for the Urban Wilderness we purchased with 2018 funding.

This rugged land lies between Madison Street and the Red River off of Tanglewood Drive, and with 2019 funding, I propose spending some \$300,000 to purchase the Tanglewood House property for use as a trailhead, with parking and a nature center for the Urban Wilderness. The vision for the Wilderness calls for multi-use trails and natural features that connect to our system of Greenways and Blueways, creating a premiere outdoor experience for future generations.

- I have included \$250,000 for Heritage Park improvements. This keeps faith with our commitment to provide improvements to our existing youth sports facilities, in addition to our new Athletic Complex.
- The budget includes \$100,000 to begin site location evaluation and preliminary design of a Regional Community Recreation

Center based on the results of a forthcoming Master Planning recommendation.

- I also propose \$175,000 to add parking at the Pollard Road access to the Clarksville Greenway; \$165,000 to replace the dome on the New Providence Pool; and money to improve the pavilion and restrooms at Billy Dunlop Park.

Now let's talk about roads.

Our road and transportation needs became a key point of the debate that led to passage of the Athletic Complex measure. I agree that roads are important, and that is why we have continuously invested in improving our transportation network since I have been Mayor. We will continue to do just that with the 2019 budget I am presenting today.

We can, and should, work toward better roads and better outdoor recreation facilities for our citizens at the same time. Both are important quality-of-life issues, and we need both to ensure our community's continued growth and prosperity.

So, for the coming Fiscal Year, I'm recommending a 6.2 percent increase in the Street Department's annual operating budget, to nearly \$14

million.

In addition, I will be recommending \$15 million in capital spending on city road construction.

Some of this capital project money will continue progress on designing and building two important City-owned thoroughfares:

- I am recommending \$9.6 million for final design and construction of the first phase of the Northeast Connector, This major thoroughfare will link the Wilma Rudolph Boulevard commercial district with rapidly growing Northeast Clarksville residential neighborhoods and relieve traffic at Exits 1 and 4 and on the 101st Parkway and Trenton Road.

This first phase of the NE Connector is also a key factor leading to development of a major conference center and hotel project just north of Wilma Rudolph Boulevard. Last month, the City and the Industrial Development Board announced a public-private partnership with Stoney Creek Hospitality, which will invest more than \$30 million in private sector dollars to build the long-needed conference center and hotel in our community. It will be near where the Northeast Connector meets Wilma Rudolph Boulevard.

I also am recommending just over \$2 million for design and right-of-way acquisition for the Professional Park Extension, which will connect Exit 8 to Dunlop Lane, creating another Interstate 24 gateway to the Tennova Hospital district and Wilma Rudolph Boulevard.

So again, let me paint the picture. When the Northeast Connector and the Professional Park Extension are completed, Clarksville will have a pair of major new thoroughfares that will provide another non-Interstate 24 connection from Exit 1 to Exit 8. This connecting route will open significant acreage to new development, and it will take congestion off of Trenton Road, the 101st Parkway, Wilma Rudolph Boulevard and off the Interstate 24 interchanges at both Exit 1 and Exit 4. That's exactly the kind of road network improvements that Clarksville desperately needs.

Plus, these new City-built thoroughfares will have sidewalks and/or bike paths that will enhance our community's bike and pedestrian friendliness.

While we're talking about streets and roads, here are some recently completed or now underway City projects:

- Edmondson Ferry Road at U.S. 41A Bypass, with new traffic signals, turn lanes and sidewalks.
- Intersection improvements at Needmore and Trenton roads.
- New traffic signals at Ringgold Road and the 101st Parkway.
- Nearly a million dollars in annual paving of City streets.

New or ongoing City road projects that will be funded in the 2019 budget include:

- Rossvie Road improvements, \$1.2 million. This is part of a larger \$11 million Tennessee Department of Transportation project to widen and realign Rossvie Road in front of the Schools Complex from the Interstate to Page Estates.
- Whitfield Road engineering and design, \$500,000.

Also, it's important to note in any discussion of Clarksville's streets and roads that the vast majority of our major thoroughfares are State Highways, maintained and controlled by the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

And, if you haven't noticed, thanks to the Legislature's passage of the IMPROVE Act and our strong relationship with the Tennessee Department

of Transportation, Clarksville is in the middle of a road building boom.

As of today, more than \$145 million worth of Tennessee Department of Transportation projects are under construction or committed and in development in and around the City of Clarksville.

As you recall, the City created a special road fund from a slice of available sales tax proceeds, and we have used these resources in negotiations with TDOT to advance critical projects on several of our main thoroughfares that are also state highways.

This includes the \$11 million dollar Rossvie Road project I've already mentioned and the important TDOT project to widen Warfield Boulevard/SR 374 to five lanes from Dunbar Cave Road to Wilma Rudolph Boulevard. This \$21.6 million project includes major intersection improvements at Dunbar Cave Road, Rossvie Road and Ted Crozier Boulevard.

These big TDOT-funded projects also are underway:

- TDOT broke ground last month on a \$65 million project to build a new McClure Bridge over the Cumberland and improve SR 48/13 in the City from the bridge to Zinc Plant Road.

- A \$36.7 million project will widen SR 48/Trenton Road in the City from I-24 to the 101st Airborne Division Parkway. This project, recently moved up on the list, is now in the engineering and design phase.
- A \$11.4 million project has begun to Improve SR 13/US 79 near I-24 from Cracker Barrel Boulevard to International Boulevard.
- Soon, TDOT will begin a project to add traffic signals, a rear access road and improvements to U.S. 41A between SR 76 and Richview Road. This will be a major access upgrade of this heavily congested road that serves many businesses and restaurants.

Yes, our rapid growth has created road challenges. But, when you add up all the work underway by the City and the State to improve Clarksville area streets and roads, I submit we are doing a good job of solving our problems and providing for our future with strong planning and aggressive investment.

Now let me share with you budget details from our Public Safety plan, another priority area where we invest to provide excellent Police and Fire Rescue services to keep our residents safe.

Our single largest Public Safety outlay in Fiscal Year 2019 will be \$3.5 million to construct a new District 3 Precinct headquarters at the Rossvie Schools Complex, well positioned in District 3 near Exit 8. We propose using a similar model to the one used to build a new District 1 headquarters a few years ago off Cunningham Lane at Minglewood Elementary. We appreciate that the School Board and CMCSS leaders have been willing to partner with us by donating available land near schools for these much-needed new police facilities.

We also will continue our intense focus on Police Department operations, increasing the overall Police/Dispatch budget for 2019 by 2 percent to nearly \$29.5 million dollars. This proposed budget adds seven new sworn police officers, taking our number to 305 officers -- to maintain the recommended ratio of two officers for each 1,000 residents. We also will add a full-time Information Technology Specialist to enable the Police Department to meet the expanding daily demand for IT systems and

applications, such as the new Body-Worn Camera initiative that will take effect this year.

The Police budget calls for spending \$825,000 to add 23 Ford Taurus police sedans for the new officers and to replace worn-out high-mileage police cruisers and unmarked cars. The Department also will add a 44-foot mobile command vehicle at a cost of \$432,000, with \$144,000 coming from the City's General Fund and two-thirds coming from the Drug Fund. This RV-like vehicle will provide a communications and planning center when the Department responds to critical incidents like hostage standoffs or major weather crises.

We also continue our commitment to providing the best-trained people and resources for Clarksville Fire Rescue, which has added two new fire stations and more than 33 new firefighters in the past three years.

The overall \$18.43 million Fire Rescue budget calls maintaining a workforce of 235 and no new staffing, but includes funding of \$565,000 for updated safety and communication gear and other operations equipment. We have budgeted \$875,000 in capital funds, which are dependent on approval of a federal grant request, to purchase two new fire trucks and put

two older trucks in service in the reserve fleet. The budget also includes \$58,000 for a fire safety trailer.

As I said earlier, a government's budget is its plan. We make our priorities clear and fulfill our commitments through our financial strategy. I am very fortunate to have the assistance of skilled Department Heads and city employees who understand my dedication to responsible spending while serving our growing City. I never forget that the money we spend is not mine, it's yours. The people of Clarksville have entrusted me to be the very best steward that I can be with their tax dollars. I take that trust very seriously.

My goal is to keep Clarksville moving forward with continued investment in public safety, streets, public infrastructure, parks and recreation, and economic development opportunities. Meeting these goals requires maintaining a well-trained and devoted team of employees. I am confident that the budget I am proposing will allow us to continue to do that with a minimal effect to our taxpayers.

Earlier, I stated that a continuing budget priority is ensuring a vibrant City center. So, another public investment priority I propose to continue in my 2019 budget is a new downtown parking garage. This kind of facility, envisioned on City-owned property north of City Hall, is needed to support growth in restaurant, retail and events traffic. The City would use General Fund money and Parking Commission proceeds to finance and build the garage, which would be paid back over time in part from proceeds -- mainly short and long-term parking fees -- from the garage operations. This proposed project has moved into the design stage, and is estimated to cost under \$6 million.

As the parking garage shows, I remain committed to downtown economic development. While no new money is in my 2019 budget for a Downtown Performing Arts Center, money from previous budgets remains, and we are still pursuing purchase of the Roxy Building, which will be the site of a newly designed center. Downtown needs a to be focused on the arts and entertainment to spark activity and investment and enrich our quality of life, and nothing does that better than a new Performing Arts Center.

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Also, I want to remind everyone that the City of Clarksville is in very good financial shape, thanks to our sound financial management practices. First, Clarksville's bond rating continues to remain very high, at AA+ outlook stable. We also continue to meet our legal obligation to maintain our fund balance of 20 percent. We are committed to making the most of the revenue streams we have access to and finding alternative sources like public private partnerships and grant funding. We also spend and borrow money as wisely and efficiently as possible. Our continuing stable fund balance and high bond rating are proof that our approach works.

City Government is providing taxpayers with high-value municipal services. When you think about it, this is exactly why citizens joined together more than 200 years ago to form the City to provide for the extra amenities they wanted -- things like better police and fire protection, public

utilities, parks and recreation programming and better streets -- things that only a City could provide them.

So let me give you some of the key facts and figures of the 2019 budget plan:

In the broadest analysis, the total proposed budget for the City of Clarksville for Fiscal 2019 is nearly half a billion dollars. The total City-wide budget is \$477.9 million (including all enterprise and special revenue funds). The proposed 2019 General Fund budget is \$98,155,394, which represents an increase of less than 3 percent.

I'm proposing a No-Tax-Increase budget, with the property tax rate remaining \$1.24 per \$100 of assessed property value. This is the same rate City property owners paid for the past three years. We have done this while managing to avoid a property tax increase by using excess fund balance for non-recurring expenditures while still maintaining our required 20% budget surplus, or as some call it, our emergency reserves.

Clarksville's property tax rate, at \$1.24, is much lower than Tennessee's other big cities, with Memphis at \$3.27, Knoxville at \$2.46; Nashville at \$3.16; and Chattanooga at \$2.28.

Finally, I am proposing a 2.5 percent general wage increase for our City employees. This amount is based on the findings of a Human Resources consultant's study and our HR Director's annual analysis and recommendation to the Chief Financial Officer who then reviews for funding and sustainability.

But, the main reason I am proposing this increase is simple. Our City employees deserve it. We have an incredibly talented and dedicated city team. They are the people who provide these much needed services every day. From building inspectors to program directors, from police officers and firefighters to street maintenance workers, we are very fortunate to have a group of employees who work tirelessly to make our city the best it can be. It is the right thing to do to stay competitive in the market so that we can retain the very best employees for our City.

So, you can see, City Government is an enormous enterprise. In fact, all the big things I've already talked about are just a fraction of total number of projects and functions that are carried out by the City of Clarksville.

But, we shouldn't forget about our many recent accomplishments. For example, here are just a few major projects and initiatives completed by the City of Clarksville and some of its partners in the past year.

- The City completed a much-needed \$2.5 million expansion and upgrades to the Ajax Turner Senior Citizens Center. This facility is important to our community and provides vital services to our senior population.
- In November, the City reopened Valleybrook Park, a neighborhood green space on Crossland Avenue near downtown, after a facelift funded with federal grants secured by the City of Clarksville's Office of Housing & Community Development. Improvements include two new playgrounds, new restrooms, a new pavilion, and repaving of the parking lot.
- And I'm happy to announce that another dynamic attraction soon will be added to Liberty Park. The Pat Head Summitt Plaza at Freedom Point will open with dedication ceremony scheduled for Friday, June 15. The beautiful bronze statue of legendary UT Women's Basketball Coach Summitt will be unveiled, thanks to the civic-minded work of the Summit Project Committee.

Before I wrap up, I want to thank City Department Heads and the entire Finance Department team, especially our Chief Financial Officer

Laurie Matta and Director of Finance Debbie Frazier, for their support and hard work in preparation of this budget. The next step will be City Council work sessions on May 30, June 7 and June 13, if needed. The Public Hearing and First Reading for the budget is set for June 14, with second reading and final approval expected in a Special Session on June 21.

As you can see, we continue to move forward and honor our commitment to taxpayers to do the most possible with the resources they provide City Government.

To recap, this proposed 2018-2019 budget provides funding to take the next steps in providing resources for the public safety needs of our growing population, including a new \$3.5 million District 3 Precinct headquarters, seven more police officers, and upgraded vehicles and equipment for Clarksville Fire Rescue.

It calls for investment in a much-needed Family Athletic Complex. And it provides for better parks, more healthy-living amenities and more recreational opportunities for our citizens, including a permanent-stage amphitheater in Liberty Park and moving forward with developing our unique Urban Wilderness.

It aggressively attacks our growing need to build streets and roads to fight traffic congestion.

It proposes downtown economic development, by way of a new Downtown Parking Garage and a Performing Arts Center, which will spark activity and investment and enrich our quality of life.

Most importantly, the budget reflects the highest level of fiscal responsibility, proposing aggressive and innovative strategies to position the City for a successful future, while calling for no increase in the property tax rate.

I'm proud to be the Mayor of the great City of Clarksville, Tennessee. I thank you all for the opportunity to serve. The complete copy of the budget will be available by the close of business today.