

2021 Davison State Of The City

Welcome City of Davison residents, staff and council and good evening. Tonight, I am honored to give my State of the City address for the eighth time. It remains one of the highlights of my job, as I get to talk about the City that has become home for the past 25 years. I wasn't born and raised here but did move in an early enough time in my life to call it home. I remember the day we looked at our first house. It was a local lake community that first caught our eye, but the taxes and stuffiness quickly changed my mind. The house I currently live in was literally the only house in Davison we made the trip here for. I remember falling in love right away, even to the point that I took several sticky notes left for the realtor on the counter from other interested buyers and tossed them in the trash. Within a month, it was our new home. Four kids, three dogs, two remodels, every room repainted three or four times minimum, and still here. Never in my wildest dreams, did I plan on this. But here I am, 25 years later.... haven't even considered moving since.

2020.... The one year that not even one of us could have predicted, not even the Simpsons. Lock down and don't go anywhere, unless it's for the high-risk event of gathering groceries.....put your mask on.....wash your hands.....stay away six feet.....ration your toilet paper. Sounds like a movie plot. Sick relatives, hospitals full at times, long days alone.... all became reality as we watched. Social media exploded as we had a ton of time to argue, post funny jokes, and share recipes while we stayed home for almost eight months straight. As we were not accustomed to many of our new lifestyles, we had to learn to adapt, and many of us go into survival mode. It's been a scary yet learning experience for all.

The City business went on, yet nowhere close to as usual. I don't think the staff has seen as many new policies or rule changes in the past ten years as they have seen the past one. Adapting has become key in their jobs, at some points the rules changing every other day with each press conference. Mix in the actual sickness that swept thru City hall that led to staffing issues, and we have a perfect storm for chaos. But, as in normal times, we watched as they did the best they could with what they were given and came out shining.

The ripple effect of this will go on for years. Our Governor made decisions that hurt a strong, robust economy we were enjoying, and it'll take time to recover.

The revenue from state shared pots is going to be awfully thin as many communities have the same needs and goals as we do in Davison. It's never been so important to tighten up the so-called belt and make do with what we get. On the positive side, many of the things scheduled to do in 2020 are just pushed into 2021 as if we had a long pause. It's nice that some of the long-ago proposed projects will still happen.

Rebound and growth will be key this year. We have a relatively new council that is poised to make choices that best benefits of the entire City. This group will make decisions with parameters never seen and be counted on to fiscally navigate the City as we recover. It won't be easy, but just the fact that each one of you has basically volunteered your time thus far, shows the community you're willing to accept that challenge. Not only the residents are counting on us, the many small business in town is also expecting good decisions from us as they all hope to get back to what we knew as normal. It will happen with us all working as one cohesive unit. This doesn't mean we can't disagree and debate, but it means in the end its up to us to set the example, lead and grow our community.

Looking back at the past year, I feel the city just "slowed down" versus "shut down". The executive orders from the State deemed unlawful are now starting to loosen, and soon we will be back to what we consider normal. It's now that we as council, along with staff pick up where things slowed and make the progress we are accustomed to. With things already in the works for 2021 as far as upgrades and improvements to city streets and staffing, I look forward to seeing us totally emerge from this experience.