

2013 Davison State Of The City Address

Thank you all for coming to tonight's State of the City Address. It is with great privilege that I am the one to speak on this night for the third time. It may actually come as a surprise to some of you, but I get a bit nervous when giving a formal, or pre written speech. I almost feel that I could do stand up comedy with less pressure.

I moved to Davison almost sixteen years ago and have seen an ever evolving community. Several notable large projects have happened, and numerous smaller projects completed. We have seen city staff change in various departments, and we have also seen turnover on the boards and committees within the City. The park has grown in that time with what seems like a few new features every year. We changed the landscape in several areas with development such as the Kroger Plaza, and also with safety items such as the new lighted crossing right here at Main Street. Downtown Davison has been going through what many of you think is the longest remodel on record. And it will continue this year in high gear. The one thing that hasn't changed in this town the past sixteen years is the love of hometown. It hits all ages across the board. From parents volunteering to coach youth sports, to teams of people cleaning the park. From downtown merchants filling their DDA, to school students working various events to gain service points. The common denominator since I have loved here is love of community.

We all hope to live in a community that we can be proud of and hopefully at one point take a position to give back. Davison, in my opinion is one of those sought places. We offer not only a wide range of activities and place to visit, but we also offer an excellent home town feel. This is seen through the fact that we have an outstanding park and trail system to go with it, we have four schools to offer that are part of one of the top districts in the state, and we have an excellent backbone to the daily activities, which is our city staff.

Now, with that said, you all know that the City of Davison has been going through the same thing the rest of our state and nation has gone through, tough times and tough choices. This City has over the past few years had to tighten its belt and make changes. At first it seemed gloom was headed our way, but the work of our City Manager, department heads, and this and each council, we have kept our residents in a better position than most communities our size. We have also positioned ourselves as a city to gain funds to keep moving with projects that will continue to improve our City. The downtown will undergo a transformation that will most certainly encourage more visitors to that district. Just mentioning that the canopies are coming down, and the road is being redone just touches the tip of what will happen down there. The infrastructure work, the widening and repaving of the street, and the streetscape will in a short time, make downtown a destination place for not only locals, but those in surrounding communities as well. Several new business have already opened doors down there, all the while the Downtown Development Authority continues to court new business and develop its

properties. We will also connect that downtown in a walk ability sense with the new Heritage Trail Project. It will bring a new path that continues from the beginning of the Township right into our downtown, and out to our parks. The staff has also been busy with projects to maintain the quality of life here. Having the best water in the state comes with a price. The DPW has been working diligently to make sure our water and sewer are up to date and that we are in a position to continue that standard to our residents. It also goes without saying that they are appreciated for their soon to be efforts that will be put in the many hours needed to keep our gem, Jack Abernathy Park, up to the condition it is. Our police department hasn't missed a beat under the direction of Chief Brandon. This will change over the course of 18-24 months ,when several long time officers retire, and our own Chief contemplates retirement. He has done a more that exceptional job in not just running that group, but preparing them for the next chapter after he is gone. As usual, the entire office staff has been an all star bunch. Working in what may seem like a complaint center sometimes may be nerve racking, but I never see those girls in anything less than a cheerful mood. I am not the only one who notices, I get compliments frequently on the smiles and willingness to help that they provide daily.

I guess after just reflecting on the current year, I feel that Davison has come a long way since I moved here. The puzzle continues to grow and the landscape continues to change. But again, I want to point out the constant....community heart. Looking forward, I don't see that aspect going away in Davison. We care. We all care what happens in our town. Please continue in your daily lives to care about Davison. It's the only change we DON'T need !