

City of Davison residents, business owners, staff and council...thank you for taking time to listen to this year's State of The City Address. Its once again, with great pride that I get to sit here and talk to you for a few moments about our great city. Much progress over the last year is a testament of how we as a community can pull together and grow roots and still progress right here. As I grow older and watch what is going on around me, I can be positive about what has been done and what continues to be done in our small town. Times have changed since I first moved here, and quite honestly, I don't think I'd change a thing. Twenty plus years in Davison, about half of those spent on this board, have given me a great view of how a small town can thrive. I've seen development in both business and residential backed by the hard work of the city employees.

Many residents never have the opportunity or take the time to realize how important or what it takes to make this a place to live so comfortably. So much goes on behind the scenes, I think sometimes it is just assumed that the city will run. The countless after hour meetings and conferences....the late night calls to the DPW....the afterhours calls from residents....the answering comments on Facebook....they all add up, yet mostly go unnoticed. It wasn't until I attended my first council meeting, about where RVs can be parked, that I myself realized what goes on at City Hall. That was a while ago, and I am still learning everyday what it takes to make our town run as smooth as it does. Why? Quite a simple answer.... the people that work here. I first noticed years ago, that the people involved in the City had a drive and desire to be there, and also how they interacted as team of almost friends rather than simple coworkers. Today this is still the case as you may see our employees engaging in activities that take the work aspect away for a moment and focus on the relationship. Weather it's a Packers tailgate, Ed cooking for the guys at the DPW, or a few sodas and salt wings on a Friday after work, I see our people engaging and putting the work day aside for some straight up personal fun. It most certainly brings them together, which in turn makes the work place comfortable for them to do the job every day. It's a family by all means, and this is evident in different times of the year. They have pulled together in time of joy and cried together in times of tragedy. When I stand back and watch, it makes me very comfortable as Mayor and just a resident, knowing we have honest, caring professionals that have our back 24/7. I feel extremely confident that the employees and staff are the backbone of Davison and their teamwork goes mostly unnoticed. Yet not unappreciated, as I get plenty of great comments about this team.

The City would like to continue its path of growth, yet still maintain the small-town feel. The past few years, we have developed a Capitol Improvement Plan that outlines how we want to get there. Staff, with the help of the city engineer, has a very specific plan of what needs to be done, an idea of cost, and when it would best fit for many different projects in town. By lining up our goals in one report, staff and council can work together to find ways to fund and complete projects. Some of them are growth and some of them are maintenance, and the CIP will guide us in making the right choices. This plan is reviewed and updated yearly so the residents have full transparency of what is being done.

Downtown continues to make progress and along with myself, others have noticed an increase in the amount of people that frequent Main street. Downtown is basically full of businesses currently, and the fact that they usually are, speaks volumes of the desire to be there by shop owners. The DDA is gearing up for its full slate of events soon, so this summer promises to be a great one for downtown Davison. I would say the past year has given me the most compliments and questions about our downtown than before. The city has done and continues to do its part, hopefully the development in the south end of town picks up the pace this year and is completed. The rest of the puzzle has been put together, and this is the last piece the residents have been patiently waiting for.

Best Tasting Water in THE STATE!!! For the second time in a row. Yet I feel another thing about our town that may mostly go unnoticed. As some community's statewide struggle to simply maintain a safe product to drink, our town pushes forward and gives its residents a something superior. We here just turn the faucet on and pay the bill.... the circle continues. But imagine living somewhere that it wasn't that easy.... like you had to go get water sometime daily just to live. We were given the opportunity years ago to make a decision on how water would be supplied to our residents, and the council at the time could not have made a better choice. Generations will feel the positive effects of having clean and affordable water on demand.

Our other gem? Regional Park.....If you ever need a snapshot of how great our park is, just visit on a nice sunny Saturday afternoon. The place is packed with families, singles, pets, and parking is often packed! Staff gave the park a little boost by redoing the basketball courts via grant and fundraising. How popular are those courts now? We had a nice crowd and a beautiful day to cut the ribbon and show the community what was done. They were so excited and still are...to the point that there have even been some early weather birds chomping at the bit to play already. The courts are beautiful and promise to be a great hang out this summer!

A few other things before I wrap this up...just some behind the scene items that residents mostly wouldn't hear about. Our city is in good financial standing and even received one of the best audits to date. Our Treasurer has done an outstanding job not only for the city but for herself thru personal and professional development. The Police Chief has also done an outstanding job of keeping this town safe and comfortable. He has done this with the cards dealt him, not always the ones he wants. Although the general consensus is that we have a safe community, it may come to a point that the residents are given a choice concerning an increase in public safety that may come with a small cost. Property values slowly increase while the city tries to make to most of the money given back from the State of Michigan. As this money still remains at the minimum, staff makes diligent efforts to make the best decisions for the residents. Our city manager has transitioned well from her job as clerk and has already made

several

good decisions to benefit our growth. She also continues to hone her skills thru professional development. Having a home town person in that position has proven to be an asset versus a manger that commutes as in the past. I personally think at this point, we have assembled a team of department heads that will not only make our city tops currently, but also in the future for generations to come. As a person elected to represent the community, I can confidently talk about the many positives in our small town for hours, however, I want more people to just stop by and check us out. We should all be very thankful we have such dedicated staff and also many volunteers behind the scenes to make it look good. It's been a privilege as usual to give this state of the city address because of all the good I get to mention. We will keep moving forward and always try to keep Davison and our residents a happy place to live, work, play, and raise a family.