

CLARKSVILLE MAYOR KIM MCMILLAN
POWER BREAKFAST SPEECH 2018
CLARKSVILLE: THE STATE OF THE CITY

Good Morning! I'm so happy to be with you today.

This is a great audience of business and community leaders, and I appreciate each of you being here and being involved. I'm excited to share some specifics about the growth and success of the City of Clarksville, and some thoughts about how we'll continue to move forward.

Before we go further, some members of the City Council and City Department Heads are here, so I want them to please stand and be recognized. These are the leaders of the team of nearly 1,500 skilled and dedicated workers who provide municipal services.

You see, City Government is a big complicated operation, and good work goes on each day in a multitude of important departments and offices. All told, counting our general operations, and our enterprise departments such as CDE Lightband, Clarksville Gas & Water, and the Clarksville Transit System, the City of Clarksville is a half-billion dollar a year enterprise.

And I want to thank all of our City workers who put in hours and hours of dedicated service. It's everything from fighting crime and fires; to stringing lights to beautify downtown for the holidays; to conducting activities at one of our rec centers; to spending hours in cold, wet manholes fixing broken water pipes during freezing weather. They truly are the force that continues to ensure our growth and progress!

So, let's start with a look at that growth: Estimates released in 2016 from the U.S. Census Bureau show Clarksville's population at 150,287, and you can bet it's higher today. This figure reflects a 13.1 percent increase over the past five years. The City is home to 77 percent of the Montgomery County population, which is growing at a similar rate, with a 2016 estimate of 195,734.

Clarksville remains one of the youngest cities in the state with a median age of 29.7, nearly 9 years younger than the state as a whole.

While Tennessee grew 13.6 percent in the past decade, Clarksville experienced growth rates of more than 35 percent.

You can see the City of Clarksville continues to grow dramatically, which confirms that we are moving in the right direction.

I'm proud of our success in economic development and job creation, which is reflected in our population growth. But this also means we have to keep planning and working on our infrastructure. We must sustain our public safety gains. And we must keep enhancing our quality of life assets to serve our citizens.

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

This takes a sharp focus on our priority issues, which are the bedrock capabilities that enable our economic growth and progress. I say "bedrock" because the City of Clarksville provides most of the utilities, infrastructure and sales tax collection that are the engine of our overall economic growth and job creation. The City of Clarksville also provides the majority of our quality of life amenities, such as parks, recreation centers, our senior center, and historic sites -- all the stuff that makes people want to come here to live and work. This is the bedrock of progress.

Specifically, some of my main priorities are:

- Public safety,
- Good roads and transportation systems,
- Well-managed municipal power, water and sewer utilities,
- Maintaining and improving Clarksville's exceptional quality of life,
- A thriving City center, and
- Transparency and accountability in government, which means ensuring taxpayers dollars are spent to benefit every citizen fairly.

Let me explain exactly how we are working on these bedrock priorities.

At the forefront of the City of Clarksville agenda in 2018 is a key Quality of Life Project -- our Clarksville Family Athletic Complex at Exit 8.

After several years of planning and working our plan, the City Council finally approved \$6.5 million dollars in Capital Project funding in our 2018 budget to purchase land and continue the work on the Family Athletic Complex.

The City is finalizing the purchase of the 400-acre site. This will be followed by detailed planning and design to build tournament level sites for youth soccer, baseball and softball. This site also provides a wonderful opportunity for development of a major trail around its perimeter, and a Blueway Access Point on the Red River. Space is also available for the development of an indoor ice complex.

The City also has received a commitment from National Sports Services -- a sports marketing company with decades of experience in sports franchise operations -- to bring a baseball and soccer franchise to the market, with the goal of playing in a new multi-purpose stadium at the Family Athletic Complex.

Initially, NSS and the City are targeting completion of the facility prior to the 2020 baseball season.

The multi-purpose venue is projected to have seating capacity for more than 3,000 event patrons. The facility will use an artificial-turf playing surface, which will make it easier to maintain and schedule a multitude of events. We envision youth league, high school and college baseball and soccer games and tournaments; kickball leagues; flag football leagues and more on a year-round basis. This stadium will also work as a venue for concerts and festivals.

As noted, Clarksville's population is among the youngest in the state. Our families are excited about these new high-level sports facilities and activities for their children. And we think Clarksville is ripe for a major push into Sports Tourism development, which will attract tourist dollars and serve our economic development goals.

Our Parks and Recreation Department is also very busy developing a Public Facilities Master Plan, which will give us direction on the types of facilities and programming we will need in the future. Specifically, we are looking at a regional recreation facility in the fast-growing Tiny Town Road/Northeast Clarksville area to supplement our array of community assets.

Parks and Recreation, which has 75 full-time staff and dozens of part time and seasonal employees, already manages 34 parks, pools, golf courses, historic sites and recreation centers, plus a growing system of greenways and blueways.

Our great facilities inspire great programming, which is a specialty of our Clarksville Parks & Recreation Department. Last June, when the Nashville Predators made their run into the Stanley Cup Playoffs, the City quickly used its event expertise to plan a successful series of five Predators Watch Parties. These parties pulled the community together as thousands of

residents gathered for pregame activities and then enjoyed the games on our “Movies In the Park” big screen.

And hey, if you hear anyone say there is nothing to do in Clarksville, simply direct them to one of our Activities Guides or monthly newsletters, which list scores of free or low-cost City programs, classes, events and activities.

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. Money for the project came from flood disaster relief resources distributed to the City by HUD through its Community Development Block Grant program. This shows how we are spreading improvements to all parts of our City.

Another big initiative recently completed adds another key piece to our Greenway, with expansion of the Red River Trail to the Red River Bridge. This gets us closer to the goal of connecting the RiverWalk to the Clarksville Greenway and North Clarksville, and helps us be a more active and fit community.

Another major milestone completed in 2017, thanks to City Council approval, was the purchase of nearly 70 acres in Midtown Clarksville for an Urban Wilderness Park. This area will be preserved as a natural area, with hiking trails and Red River access. We will enlist community and neighborhood input during our Master Planning process to help us determine how the Urban Wilderness will take shape.

Big projects underway in 2018 also include a \$988,000 renovation of Swan Lake Pool with a federal matching grant. This will transform an existing asset into a new, modern neighborhood park and pool.

An exciting new addition to Liberty Park-Parks & Recreation is carrying out a project started in the 2018 budget to build a bandshell for the Liberty Park Amphitheater, complete with a permanent stage that will allow expanded use of that space for concerts and events. This will make our wonderful Liberty Park even more useful and dynamic.

And I'm happy to announce that another dynamic attraction will be added to Liberty Park this year. Construction of the Pat Head Summitt Plaza at Freedom Point is scheduled to begin soon and be dedicated later this year.

The beautiful bronze statue of legendary UT Women's Basketball Coach Summitt is complete and ready for installation, thanks to the civic-minded work of the Summit Project Committee. This much-anticipated addition to our community, along with a set of interpretive plaques, will serve as a needed and fitting tribute to Coach Summitt, a sports icon who was born and raised in our community, and remains the leading game-winner in NCAA women's basketball.

We all know Clarksville is more than young families. The City recently improved the quality of life for more senior Clarksville residents, completing a new 14,600 square foot to the Ajax Turner Senior Citizens Center. We will dedicate the \$2.3 million addition in coming weeks, which is providing more space for programs and services for the center's growing number of seniors who drop in for meals, activities, classes and recreation.

And a great City takes care of young and old, and those who may be dealing with challenges and hard times.

For example, last spring the City of Clarksville, Urban Ministries and the Tennessee Housing Development Agency dedicated a \$460,000 CDBG funded facility on Crossland Avenue known as Safe Place that provides living space, counseling and stabilization services for up to four homeless families at a time.

Now, let me tell you about another "bedrock" priority.

Things to do, activities for families, parks, senior centers, and homeless support programs are a big part of the City's mission. But none of that is possible without the efforts of our Public Safety Departments to fight crime, fires, vehicle crashes and unsafe buildings.

That's why I work hard every day to make sure we have outstanding Police, Fire and Building & Codes department serving all residents of Clarksville.

The fully accredited Clarksville Police Department has 300 sworn officers protecting our residents, their businesses and their property. Crime statistics show we are one of the safest communities of our size in America.

According to the most recent TBI data, Clarksville Police maintained a crime rate of 97 crimes per 1,000 population, with a closure rate of 49 percent. These are the best numbers for any Tennessee city with a population of 150,000 or more.

In 2017, Clarksville Police implemented a new Computer Aided Dispatch through a joint effort with Montgomery County, and E911. This system allows for real time data from a call for service to be sent directly to our Police Officers in the field.

The City is proud to have received a \$337,500 federal grant, one of the largest awarded to mid-sized departments, to implement a police body-worn camera program, which should be completed in 2018. This is another technological advance that will help promote public trust and transparency while also improving the efficiency of the Clarksville Police Department.

We also are working on a plan to budget and build a new full service precinct headquarters for District Three, which encompasses the area on the east side of the City along Interstate 24. We are hoping to collaborate again with CMCSS for a site on the Rossvie Schools Complex, mirroring the success of placing our District One headquarters on the Minglewood School site.

Clarksville Fire Rescue has also been the focus of investment in facilities and manpower. Fire Rescue has 220 firefighters, and we built and staffed Fire Station 11 and Fire Station 12 over the past three years to keep up with the growing demand for service and to provide strong response times.

In 2017 Clarksville Fire Rescue completed a \$620,000 expansion to the Main Fire Station; purchased a 75-foot aerial fire truck for \$684,000; and like CPD, implemented the Computer Aided Dispatch system.

For 2018, Fire Rescue will add a \$236,000 rescue truck and a \$349,000 fire engine to keep its fleet of equipment in top shape and prepared to protect our City.

The Clarksville Building & Codes Department is a key part of our public safety efforts and works to ensure buildings and structures meet high standards.

They also are a true reflection of the growth rate of the City, with Building & Codes having a very busy 2017 with 284 permits for commercial projects with construction costs of approximately \$130 million.

In 2018, Building & Codes already expects future commercial developments totaling \$40.5 million in construction near Exit 11 and proposed medical facilities at Exit 4 totaling approximately \$20 million.

Clarksville's growth has strained our existing roadways, and Clarksville Street Department is deeply engaged in planning a set of new City constructed thoroughfares -- notably the Northeast Connector and Professional Parkway -- while working with the Tennessee Department of Transportation to speed up improvements to many of the City's major thoroughfares, which are controlled by TDOT.

The Northeast Connector, which is in the environmental assessment and early design phase, would provide another link between our commercial zone at Exit 4 with Northeast Clarksville near Exit 1. The Professional Parkway project would provide another gateway from Exit 8 to the fast-growing medical and office sector around Dunlop Lane and the commercial district around Exit 4.

City engagement and investment has helped TDOT move ahead on major construction to improve Warfield Boulevard, Rossvie Road near the Rossvie Schools Campus, work on Trenton Road, and a major project around the US 41A and State Route 76 intersection.

Projects or initiatives completed in 2017 by the Clarksville Street Department street department include:

- Sidewalk installation around APSU.
- Tylertown and Trenton Road traffic signal installation. This was a TDOT project with a \$200,000 City contribution.

Projects moving forward in 2018 include:

- Rossvie Road right of way is being purchased and bids for first phase of the construction project.
- Bidding and contract for the Edmondson Ferry Pike traffic signal and road alignment improvements.
- Bidding for construction of the Dunlop and International Drive intersection improvements.
- Completing construction of Ringgold and 101st Division Parkway intersection improvements.
- Completing construction of the Franklin Street and University Avenue intersection project.

Clarksville Transit System is another essential and growing element of Clarksville's transportation capabilities. System highlights include:

- Delivery of three new Hybrid Transit Buses, and purchase more new Hybrid buses to be delivered in March.
- Expansion of the routes serving the APSU campus.
- Purchase and installation of Bus Shelters and benches along major routes.

Another bedrock priority that allows us to continue our growth and prosperity is our excellent utility infrastructure, which must be constantly maintained and upgraded.

Clarksville Gas & Water continues to meet the massive demands of our growing community, while offering its service at some of the most competitive rates in the Southeast. Our wastewater treatment plant has been rebuilt after it was damaged in the 2010 flood. Planning is under way for a second water treatment facility. And our community's industrial growth, with plants like Hankook, Google and LG, is directly served by expanded facilities managed by Clarksville Gas & Water.

Gas & Water achieved substantial completion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, which was essentially destroyed in the 2010 Flood. The destruction also required extensive engineering to redesign a facility that would incorporate the newest technological advances and allow the facility to stay abreast of a changing regulatory environment.

The newly completed facility has a daily capacity of twenty-five million gallons per day and a short term capacity of seventy-five million gallons per day.

Clarksville Gas & Water and the City's Finance Office have been vigilant in managing the debt required to upgrade the utility's facilities. The department issued \$51,350,000 in general revenue bonds to refund bonds issued in 2011 and 2013 at more favorable terms. The refunding will save ratepayers more than \$4.8 million dollars over the 20-year life of the bonds. The Department has taken advantage of the market four times since 2013 to save ratepayers in excess of \$10.8 million dollars.

And here's a big success story you need to know about: In 2018, Gas & Water will pursue the Valleybrook Equalization Basin project.

A Consent Agreement between the City and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation requires the City to address the combined stormwater and sewer system in the

downtown business area. Previous studies dating back to the mid 2000's have focused on separating the two systems with some construction estimates as high as \$70 million dollars.

Improvements to the wastewater collection system and the Wastewater Treatment Plant have provided an alternative to the separation approach suggested in previous studies. The Gas & Water Department will use an equalization basin at an estimated construction cost of \$4.5 million dollars. The Valleybrook Equalization Basin will give Gas & Water the ability to store the combined sewage and storm water created during rain events and then slowly release and pump the combined water to the Wastewater Plant for treatment.

The plan has received the State's approval will save ratepayers millions of dollars. Spending \$4-point-5 million rather than \$70 million to fix a longstanding problem sure sounds like successful utility management to me!

CDE Lightband has earned awards as one of the Tennessee Valley's best managed power utilities, and its broadband services division recently celebrated reaching 10 years and 20,000 customers. The operation's leaders recently refinanced a big slice of its debt, which allowed it to save \$15 million in bond payments over the next 20 years.

No talk to this group would be complete without discussing our plans for Downtown.

We need to change the focus of downtown strategy toward corporate recruitment and private investment and away from reliance on government-funded construction. Yes, we need smart government investment in downtown projects, but taxpayers alone can't be expected to rebuild downtown. We need to focus on true economic development and recruit companies and private-sector jobs into downtown.

My downtown agenda has these key elements:

JOBS, JOBS, JOBS.

The City of Clarksville must aggressively recruit private employers and private investment to downtown. We all know that downtown is dominated by property owned by City and County Government, APSU and churches. It desperately needs more jobs-producing and tax-base enriching property in private ownership.

The City of Clarksville must strive to keep existing City government jobs downtown and pursue a strategy of moving government jobs to the community's core when feasible. The out-migration of County government jobs and some City jobs away from downtown over the past

two decades has been a significant negative influence on downtown's economic health.

One key public investment I have championed is a downtown Clarksville Performing Arts and Conference Center. This resource would focus on enhancing and increasing the essential arts and entertainment component for downtown as well as providing much needed meeting space for conferences and other events.

Significant research already conducted shows that CPACC is needed and would be successful. This research shows that CPACC would attract at least 200 annual performances, concerts, family oriented shows and meetings. This is the kind of economic engine downtown needs to inspire more restaurants and retail, which means jobs and an expanding tax base.

Our consultants have recommended the site for the new Center include the Roxy Theatre building and the building adjacent to the city-owned lot on Franklin Street. This year's budget approved \$1.5 million dollars and authorization to begin negotiations to purchase those two buildings to keep the project moving forward. As we speak here today, an offer is pending on one of those properties, and negotiations on another are ongoing.

Finally, another public investment priority 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 food, retail and events traffic. The City would issue revenue bonds to build the garage, which would be paid back over time from proceeds -- mainly short and long-term parking fees -- from the garage operations. This project is similar to the Commerce Street garage which the Parking Commission just made the last payment on. This proposed project is in the feasibility and planning stages, and is estimated to cost about \$5 million.

CONCLUSION

This stuff I've been talking about -- programs, buildings, technology, personnel, construction, design, planning -- all takes a lot of time and effort, and it comes to life as steel and bricks and mortar and pavement, much like the beautiful and very giant Hankook Tire Plant, that we gathered to help dedicate a few months ago.

City Government, much like that huge industrial manufacturing plant, can seem overwhelming in its sheer size and volume. So let me relate Clarksville's story, and my goals and ambitions for our community, with something tangible that I can see and hear very clearly.

I look at that giant Hankook plant, or a new City Police or Fire Station, or a new roadway, and I see people. I see my friends and neighbors and fellow citizens, the people who have put their

faith in me to work for a better Clarksville.

I can see the faces of the workers who are proud to have a good job at Hankook Tire in Clarksville. I can see their families, people with hopes and dreams for more successful lives.

I can see their neighborhoods of strong houses, many new and many being improved, served by our great police and fire departments, and our reliable utilities and city services. I see great schools, filled with healthy, striving students. I see a growing marketplace, expanding to serve the needs of our growing population.

This is the real beauty of the world-class economic and community development that we are seeing in Clarksville. It's all about the substantial positive impact it has on our citizens, real people whose lives are improving. This level of investment and new jobs shows that the City of Clarksville is living up to its commitment to be a great place to live, work and raise a family.

So every day I'm thrilled by the awe-inspiring opportunities this great City offers for a large number of real people, good deserving people, who call Clarksville home.

I want to thank each of you, too, as leaders, for joining with us in being builders of a stronger community, builders of stronger families, and builders of successful people for generations to come.

Have a great rest of the day, and let's keep building a greater Clarksville -- together, and for the greater good of all our citizens.