

**CITY OF HARLINGEN 2016 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS:**  
**LOOKING BACK AT THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF OUR SECOND CENTURY**

**JANUARY 29, 2016**

**1. WELCOME**

Good afternoon and Welcome to Harlingen's State of the City Address. As always, I wish to thank the Harlingen Rotary Club and its Program Chairman Mark Molina for organizing this annual event. Each year this organization contributes an amazing amount of financial support and service to our community truly exemplifying the Rotary motto of "Service Above Self." Thank you for all you do. I'm proud to be a member of this great organization.

Thank you to all of the guests previously introduced for joining us here today. Your presence honors us and symbolizes the partnerships we have in moving our region forward. It is my privilege now to introduce the Harlingen City Commission whose leadership and commitment contributes so mightily to the achievements of our City: our District 1 Commissioner Danny Castillo; District 2 Commissioner Tudor Uhlhorn; from District 3, Commissioner Mike Mezmar; District 4 Commissioner Ruben de la Rosa; and District 5 Commissioner and our Mayor Pro-Tem Victor Leal. And, although each is elected from a district, all of these men work for all of our citizens to better the community as a whole and to keep Harlingen on a path of progress and prosperity. Thank you for your outstanding service.

**2. THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF OUR SECOND CENTURY**

As all of you know, in 2010 we celebrated Harlingen's Centennial. It truly was the party of the century. From the dedication of a beautiful new park in our City Center and a great steam engine which drew thousands from throughout the region to the opening of a time capsule placed at City Hall 50 years before, we celebrated and reflected on the tremendous progress Harlingen made during its first 100 years. Today, I ask you to join me in looking back once again and consider the progress made during the first five years of Harlingen's Second Century, from 2010

through 2015. Seeing how much we've accomplished in that relatively short time, I think you'll appreciate even more why Harlingen is a fantastic place in which to invest, live, and visit.

### **3. A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE**

Harlingen is a very safe place to live, in part because the City has long been blessed with outstanding leadership in the Police Department. With that leadership, and the exemplary work of the men and women of the Police force, violent crimes have gone from a total of 392 per year in 2010 to 203 in 2015, a reduction of almost half. And property crimes have been reduced from 4447 in 2010 to 2193 in 2015, a reduction of more than half. Our violent crime rate is one of the lowest in both the state and in the nation at just 2.62 per 1000, based on the latest (2014) figures. Just over a year ago, we welcomed our newest Chief of Police Jeff Adickes and his wife Sonya. While cities around the nation struggle with law enforcement issues, Chief Adickes took an already strong community policing philosophy and made it even stronger. The Harlingen Police Department is everywhere in the community and in a very good way. New initiatives included the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Run with the Heroes RGV 5K Run & Walk benefiting the Ronald McDonald House and Special Olympics and the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Shop with a Cop during the holiday season. HPD continues to work closely with numerous Neighborhood Watch and youth groups, which greatly enhances our security and sense of well being. Many thanks, Chief, to you and all of the great men and women of the Harlingen P.D.

### **4. HARLINGEN'S FINANCIAL STRENGTH MAKES IT A GREAT PLACE TO INVEST**

Harlingen also remains a great place in which to invest, to start a business, and to build a home. That's because Harlingen is as sound and strong financially as ever before. Once again we ended the year with more than 140 days of operating reserves in our fund balance. Over the last five years, as the City has grown, our fund balance has also, from \$10,527,631 in 2010 to \$15,974,356 (unaudited) at the end of Fiscal Year 2015. A strong fund balance is critical to maintaining the creditworthiness of a City.

Fitch Ratings pointed to Harlingen’s “strong” and “healthy reserves” as key to our strong credit rating. In 2011 both Fitch and Standard and Poor’s upgraded the City’s bond rating to AA- and over the last five years, we’ve maintained that improved rating. In an October 2015 report, Fitch noted Harlingen “... has a stable financial history . . . tax base and economic growth remained positive during the recession. . . the City’s overall debt burden and total carrying costs are moderate . . .[and ] principal amortization is rapid.” Further, Fitch noted that our debt carrying charges were only 8.3% of our spending and that 86% of what debt we do have will be repaid within 10 years.

Harlingen also has the lowest tax rate of the nine major communities in Cameron County. Our tax rate is lower than most of the major cities in Hidalgo County as well. In fact, on average, Harlingen’s tax rate is almost 20% lower than all the major communities in the Rio Grande Valley. We’ve kept our commitment to the citizens to keep the tax rate low over the last five years.

Strong reserves, moderate to low debt, and a significantly lower tax rate are the hallmarks of Harlingen’s financial strength. They also are strong selling points for our Economic Development Corporation when they market the community to industrial prospects. And it’s also very important to our partners at the Chamber as they work to improve and enhance the overall climate for business. At this time, I’d like to recognize City Manager Dan Serna and Finance Director Elvia Trevino and her department for their outstanding efforts on behalf of our citizens in maintaining Harlingen as a model of financial stability and strength.

## **5. INVESTING IN HARLINGEN IS CREATING JOBS**

Our Economic Development Team has been very effective in using all of Harlingen’s strengths to successfully attract investors and create new jobs. Since 2010, we’ve created more than 760 new jobs in 470,000 square feet of retail shopping space including at Bass Pro Shops, Burlington, and Sam’s Club. We also have created 655 new jobs in the restaurant industry to

support over 63,000 square feet of new restaurant space and an additional 40,000 square feet of space which has been repurposed for restaurant use. On the industrial side, multinational companies like Qualfon, Pan American Hydrogen, and Pentair opened facilities in Harlingen, creating 760 new jobs and investing over \$80 million in our community. Employment by the Veteran's Administration has increased more than fivefold in five years, from just under 100 jobs in Harlingen in 2010, to 550 today. And, when Palms Behavioral Health opens its 94-bed state-of-the art psychiatric hospital on Victoria Lane later this year, it will employ another 225 health care workers and professionals with salaries averaging \$35,000 annually. Altogether more than 1000 new healthcare jobs have been created in Harlingen over the past five years. We've seen the multi-million-dollar redevelopment of The Reese in our historic downtown, the creation of the new Bert Ogden Auto Complex on the expressway and the opening of dozens of other businesses large and small. All told, in the first five year's of Harlingen's Second Century, we've created at least 3500 new jobs and our unemployment rate has gone down from 10.8% in 2011 to 5.5% at the end of 2015.

New and expanding retail, healthcare, and industrial businesses have invested nearly \$200 million in buildings and space over the past five years, helping to grow our property tax base by 8.22% to over \$2.9 billion at the end of 2015. That included over 2600 construction permits totaling more than \$386 million.

By any standard, that is very impressive economic growth, of which we all can be very proud. Please join me in recognizing the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Raudel Garza and his staff, along with HEDC Chairman Michael Lamon and his Board, for their contributions to our community's economic vitality, along with their partners at the Harlingen Industrial Foundation, the Harlingen Manufacturers Association, the Harlingen Chamber of Commerce, and the Harlingen Downtown Improvement District.

## **6. INVESTING IN THE CITY'S INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **a. New Fire Station**

Last week, the City Commission awarded a contract to build a new fire station on our west side which will significantly improve response times and meet the demands of our community as it grows further west in the future. The improved response time likewise will improve insurance ratings and help make it more affordable to obtain fire and casualty insurance. Funds for this project had been set aside from a previous bond issue approved by voters. This new fire station represents our continuing commitment to provide each and every part of Harlingen with top notch public safety services.

### **b. Streets**

During the past five years, we also built several new roads and re-surfaced many more. Much of this was around growing retail areas like Bass Pro Drive, Teege, Brazil, and Dixieland Road, as well as in several residential areas. We did all of this out of the general fund revenue stream, rather than borrowing money. And we know we need to do more. With all of the wet weather in recent years, several streets have deteriorated and are in need of attention. That's why the City Commission budgeted \$1.5 million for street improvements during this current fiscal year.

### **c. Drainage**

We've also completed nearly \$6.2 million in drainage projects over the last five years. Important drainage system improvement projects include completion of the Third Street Drainage Ditch Project, the Jefferson Drainage Ditch Project, and Phases One, Two, Three, and Four of the Buchanan, Hays, and M Street Storm Sewer Project.

### **d. Parks and Playgrounds.**

One of the most enjoyable things the Mayor and City Commission get to do is participate in the ribbon cuttings for new parks and improvements which benefit our children. In 2015 we installed new park facilities at C.B Wood Park, including all-access, ADA compliant

Playscapes and completed Rangerville Road Park renovations that included new playground decks and swings and new synthetic turf that make a great landing pad for kids jumping and falling down. We also received a \$158,000 grant from the Texas General Land Office to improve the wetlands within the Arroyo Colorado Watershed and partnered with the County to reconstruct the parking lot at the popular Hugh Ramsey Nature Park. A retention basin now is being constructed to divert runoff into the new wetland ponds, to enhance the beauty and diversity of this wildlife sanctuary that is such a wonderful asset for residents and an important anchor of our birding and ecotourism industry.

2015 also saw completion of the long-awaited 25<sup>th</sup> Street Hike and Bike Trail. This beautiful and unique trail connects several important assets, all the way from Ramsey Park to TSTC and includes a lateral trail that heads west from Bonham Elementary along the canal toward Business 77. The Federal Highway Transportation Department awarded the City \$2.1 million and the City's 4B Community Improvement Corporation contributed the other \$500,000. This 4.1-mile trail is the first identified and planned as a result of our 2010 Master Trail Plan. And, through the generosity of the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation, Harlingen received a \$396,000 grant for construction of a one-mile, fully-lighted trail to supplement the popular half-mile trail at Pendleton Park. We hope to complete the Hometown Heroes Trail project by March. Please join me in thanking the Harlingen Community Improvement Board and the Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation for their investment in these projects, which will help enhance the health and well-being of our residents.

## **7. CREATION OF THE MAYOR'S WELLNESS COUNCIL**

Thanks to Judy Quisenberry and Sandra Flinn, the Legacy Foundation also helped organize the City of Harlingen's first Mayor's Wellness Council. The City Commission passed Resolution No. R15-36 creating an advisory board comprised of representatives from hospitals and health clinics, educational institutions, and businesses, including the local fitness industry, to steer Harlingen into a healthier future. Over 80 people attended the initial organizational meeting

in November and learned from Dr. Baker Harrell, founder and CEO of It's Time Texas, that diabetes and obesity continues to climb at alarming rates, especially among children. The cost to business, the healthcare industry and our communities makes fitness not only a personal and humanitarian issue, but also an economic imperative. The Mayor's Wellness Council is working on specific and measurable goals and outcomes which truly will benefit our community. I urge all of you to support and participate in this important initiative.

## **8. COMMUNITY CLEANUPS AND BEAUTIFICATION**

Parks, trails and wellness are all part of improving the quality of life in Harlingen. Improving the city's environment and enhancing its appearance also is important to making people want to visit, live or invest in a City. We're working hard at making Harlingen a showplace and our many years of working at beautification were rewarded in March 2015 when Harlingen, for the second time, won First Place in the annual Governor's Community Achievement Award competition and a cash prize of \$250,000. This honor was based on progress in seven areas: Community Leadership and Coordination; Public Awareness; Education; Beautification and Community Improvement; Litter Prevention and Cleanup; Solid Waste Management; and Litter Law and Illegal Dumping Enforcement. I want to congratulate all of the staff who work so hard in our Public Works, Parks, and Code Enforcement Departments, as well as Keep Harlingen Beautiful Chairman Nick Consiglio, his entire Board, and the many staff and volunteer partners that participate in beautification and improvement projects throughout the community. Earlier this month the City Commission approved the design of the landscape improvements being funded by this award, at the Intersection of Interstates 2 and 69E—a major gateway to our City. The colorful and attractive design incorporates many native plants that are drought and heat tolerant. We hope to see it completed in the next few months.

Citywide cleanup and beautification efforts will continue to be a priority. Over the last five years, in partnership with the Army National Guard, we have demolished 134 unsafe, crime ridden structures and worked with dozens of private property owners to demolish more than 94

others and to rehabilitate many more. And, from 2011 to 2015, we have eliminated 440.40 tons of debris and 4217 tires from streets and alleys with a great deal of volunteer help. Thank you to all of our many wonderful volunteers.

**9. LEVERAGING FISCAL & HUMAN RESOURCES**

Every once in a while, someone will ask if the City has a grant writer and if not, why don't we hire one. My answer is always this. The City has lots of grant writers and they are excellent at what they do. In the last five years, our staff have secured over \$3.4 million in grant funding for some of the parks projects I've already mentioned. They also have garnered over \$6.8 million in grants for the roadway and drainage projects I described and for new sidewalks. Our public safety grants have totaled \$3.8 million and there are others. Altogether, over the last five years the City of Harlingen has secured over \$14 million in grants. At this time I'd like all of the City of Harlingen staff members to please stand and be recognized for the great work they do which, in many cases, means wearing multiple hats and performing multiple responsibilities on behalf of our community. It truly is an honor to serve with this talented group of hard-working, dedicated individuals.

**10. HARLINGEN WATERWORKS**

Providing safe drinking water and the treatment of wastewater is a fundamental responsibility any City has to its citizens and one which is often taken for granted. Our Harlingen WaterWorks System has worked diligently over the last several years on building and improving water and wastewater facilities and increasing capacity. Many of these projects have been completed very cost effectively with in-house design and construction, including the Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion project currently underway. In 2007, national consultants estimated that it would cost \$50 million to construct a new wastewater plant in Harlingen, which we need to accommodate future growth. This massive project will be completed in 2017 at an estimated cost of \$20 million, a savings of \$30 million, due to the abilities and hard work of General Manager Darrell Gunn and his team. Over the past five years, Harlingen WaterWorks has completed 26



major projects totaling \$21,639,315, to ensure we have clean drinking water and effective wastewater service in our homes and businesses. Please join me in congratulating Board Chairman Josh Fields and all of the Trustees for their leadership and Darrell and the entire Waterworks staff for their service to the community.

#### **11. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Earlier in this address, I described parks, drainage and demolition projects which have contributed tremendously to the improvement of our community. Many of those projects would not have been possible without funding and administrative assistance from our Community Development Department. Community Development Block Grants are expertly administered by our fine CDBG staff resulting not only in many important infrastructure projects but also critical support for many fine community organizations, from Amigos del Valle and Court-appointed Special Advocates to the Girl Scouts and the Boys and Girls Club. Over the past five years, CDBG also has overseen construction of new housing and rehabilitation of owner-occupied homes for many in our community who need assistance. The CDBG program currently has four affordable homes under construction and funds available to help eligible homebuyers purchase existing homes within the City. Programs like this, along with our new Rotary Partnership with Habitat for Humanity, are key to improving both lives and neighborhoods, removing blight, and enhancing the quality of life throughout our community. I want to recognize our CDBG staff and their Board for the amazing work they do.

#### **12. HARLINGEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEDICAL SCHOOL AND UT RGV**

In March of 2010, the Harlingen Economic Development Corporation released a study charting a course for the development of our Regional Academic Health Center here in the Rio Grande Valley into a full, four- year medical school. The study and strategic plan was developed by Dr. David Altman and Mike Watt, two of this country's most noted medical education experts. They were the consultants who in the 1990s aided Harlingen in creating the plan for the Regional Academic Health Center and since then have been used by the University of Texas System in

designing much of the necessary infrastructure both for the medical school here and for the one in Austin. We released that study to a good deal of fanfare at the RAHC with UT officials present to hear what Dr. Altman and Mr. Watt had mapped out for a future medical school in the Rio Grande Valley. Afterwards we met with UT System officials including then Chancellor Francisco Cigarroa and Vice Chancellor for Medical Affairs Dr. Kenneth Shine. We shared the plan with leaders in Hidalgo County. And in 2013, UT announced that it would move forward with the development of the medical school. Let's hear what Dr. Shine said back in 2013:

♦ The dream of a medical school – pushed and prodded by Harlingen for decades – a medical school built largely on a step-by-step plan developed by Harlingen -- has finally become a reality. In October 2015, Founding Dean Francisco Fernandez announced that the UT RGV School of Medicine had succeeded in being accredited and was accepting applications for its inaugural class of 50 medical students that begins this summer. Within a few days, there were almost 3,000 applications for those 50 spots.

Harlingen's 41-acre RAHC campus has and will continue to be an important part of not only the Medical School but of UT-RGV. UT has invested more than \$10 million in construction of a 15,000 square foot Simulation Hospital in Harlingen. Just last September, Senator Cornyn , Governor Abbott, Congressman Vela, Congressman Cuellar, and VA Secretary McDonald visited the RAHC in Harlingen for a VA health forum. And, as this photo shows, the Senator, Governor, and VA Secretary clearly were impressed with our SMART Hospital and its cutting-edge teaching technology – including 3-G computer-simulated patients (fancy term for mannequins) and “iPads on steroids” which are unique to UT RGV School of Medicine and not in use anywhere else in the United States. Soon we will see a new medical school facility open in Edinburg and medical research activities are developing on the campus in Brownsville. But the third and fourth-year medical school programs and clinical rotations will remain anchored here at the RAHC in Harlingen. All of us should be proud of the leadership role Harlingen has had in

this remarkable achievement of having a medical school in the Rio Grande Valley. We will realize many benefits from this regional institution in the years ahead.

### **13. THE HARLINGEN AEROTROPOLIS**

Harlingen has the best airport in South Texas. And last year, we made it even better. The Airport completed its Runway Lighting Project, installing high intensity lights on both air carrier runways to assist pilots landing in inclement weather. We also installed Thermoplastic surface guidance signs and a Medium Intensity Approach Light System with Runway End Indicator Lights on Runway 31. This system will reduce the landing minimums and the chance for diversions of flights to alternate airports.

In addition to having the most heavily trafficked cargo airport in the region, and the most accessible and modern airport facility, we are paving the way for new industry to locate on its east side. Two years ago, I told you about the Airport Board's vision of creating a Harlingen Aerotropolis, a multi-use, airport-centered industrial and commercial development with easy access to the Port, the Free Trade Bridge, and the Interstate. With the help of our good friends at AEP and especially community leader Frank Espinosa, the 479-acre Harlingen Aerotropolis has earned the AEP Quality Site designation in the Large Industrial Park category. No other community in South Texas, and only one other in the state, has received this designation. McCallum Sweeney, one of the world's leading site selection and economic development consulting firms, was engaged by AEP to oversee the process. Because of this certification, our EDC has seen a tremendous increase in prospect activity especially among companies seeking more than 200 acres. We want to publicly thank AEP for sponsoring and paying for this certification process. Frank Espinosa, please stand and be recognized on behalf of AEP.

The airport and the EDC are also working closely with our partners at Texas State Technical College to repurpose a former Harlingen Air Force Base jet engine test facility into a

rocket propulsion test facility. TSTC students are working on a 3D model of the facility to be used in marketing the Aerotropolis to aerospace companies.

United Launch Alliance is a strong anchor of the Harlingen Aerotropolis, and I'm pleased to report that we finalized another five-year lease agreement with ULA in 2015. Over months of negotiations, the City, EDC and VIA worked together to retain 150 jobs and over \$20 million in investment in Harlingen. Since the agreement was signed, ULA has invested additional funds for the purchase of new equipment and hired additional high-wage employees. The new equipment and new hires are part of the efforts by ULA to bring some of their manufacturing processes in-house to yield higher efficiencies and stronger returns. We expect it to result in more advanced manufacturing jobs in Harlingen and another \$6 million investment.

Let's hear what ULA's Chief Operating Officer has to say about Harlingen in this new video being developed by the EDC and the Airport to market the Aerotropolis.

♦ It's always great when a satisfied customer brags about your community and its workforce. Congratulations to our Airport Board and the EDC on this accomplishment.

#### **14. DOWNTOWN & REDEVELOPMENT OF THE BAXTER BUILDING**

Not everything is easy and not everything happens fast. Those of you who have worked on downtown revitalization over the years understand it isn't easy to restore economic vitality to an area of empty storefronts and low rents, with a declining number of shoppers, and increasing vagrancy, especially when the City's tallest building, the nine-story Baxter Building towers deteriorated and blighted on our main street. Now, decades since we began our revitalization efforts, we finally are at a point where Harlingen residents proudly show off their downtown to friends and relatives when they visit. Shops and services, customers, and traffic have returned. Based on the monthly, quarterly, and annual reports the Harlingen Downtown Office has submitted to the Texas Historical Commission since our program began its affiliation with THC Main Street Program 21 years ago, Downtown Harlingen has realized overall reinvestment of more than \$24 million, and net creation of more than 600 jobs and 130 small businesses. More

than 20,000 volunteer hours from many of the business leaders here in this room have been contributed in support of our revitalization program.

So that we not squander that significant investment, our EDC and Community Improvement Board took the bold move to acquire the Baxter Building a couple years ago, for about \$300,000. Since then we have spent approximately \$160,000 removing asbestos and putting a new roof on it — all while looking for the right investor to redevelop this iconic building that symbolizes Harlingen's 20<sup>th</sup> century prosperity and is one of just two in our Community that are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. At the end of last year, the 4B Community Improvement Board signed a real estate contract to sell the nine-story building to MRE Capital and Interstate Holdings for \$250,000, on the condition that they invest \$4.5 million to restore the building and put it to good use. MRE has experience in redevelopment of blighted historic properties such as the Parrish Hotel in Pratt, Kansas, which they tell us was much more deteriorated than ours. Our due diligence included talking to the Pratt City Manager, who reported his delight at everything that MRE did at no cost to the municipality. The deal is dependent upon MRE qualifying for housing and historic tax credits, which they have done successfully in the past. It will be several months before we know if it will close. But if it does—and I am very optimistic—the return on the City's investment will be nearly twentyfold. And more importantly, it will accomplish the important objective of turning an eyesore into an asset in the heart of our vibrant Downtown.

#### **15. THE CONVENTION CENTER**

Another project championed by our Community Improvement Board also has been a longtime goal of the City, to bring an upscale Hotel and Convention Center to Harlingen. After years of feasibility studies, proposals, and negotiations with developers, the City signed a Memorandum of Understanding with BC Lynd Hospitality and Reyna Family Development last month. The MOU provides for the development of an upscale, 150-room hotel such as a Hilton Garden Inn to be built adjacent to a 43,700 square foot Convention Center. This will all be

located just northwest of Sam's in the Harlingen Heights development. To give you some context, if you have been to McAllen Convention Center or the Brownsville Events Center, the seating capacity will be equal to or greater than those facilities. The cost to Harlingen to build the Convention Center will be between \$13-14 million and will be paid for through current cash reserves and future bond repayments from the 4B Community Improvement Board revenues, which come from sales tax. Hotel/motel tax revenues also will be used. The developer will lease the Convention Center and manage it for the City. The developer also will share 50% of the operating costs, after their annual lease payment to the City. The City will not pay the developer any incentives for the hotel nor be involved in its operation. This project will be unique to the Valley in that it will be the only Convention Center which will operate connected to and in conjunction with a major hotel. It also will be the only one operated as a public/private partnership. BC Lynd Hospitality is no stranger to hotels and large projects having purchased and completed a \$30 million renovation of San Antonio's St. Anthony Hotel. Their parent company also has built luxury high-rise apartment buildings in Chicago and the 33-story Bowie Apartments in downtown Austin. We hope to break ground by mid-year.

## **16. CLOSING**

My friends, there are many more accomplishments I could talk about today and many opportunities that lie ahead. Over the last five years there has been much to celebrate, from plans made and partnerships formed to dreams realized and promises fulfilled.

Much of what makes Harlingen a great community often is taken for granted. But, looking around our state, the nation and the world, we can be grateful and proud to live in a community where crime is low, property values are rising, traffic flows in an orderly manner, and the water supply is clean and abundant. And, on top of that, we have new playgrounds and parks, more shops and services, increasing higher education opportunities, a leading healthcare center and industry, renewed

vitality in neighborhoods throughout the City, the best airport and site ready land for manufacturing, and the best downtown in the region. And, we build rockets too.

Back in September, a 33-year-old family physician with three young boys living here in Harlingen sent me an e-mail. In it, he said, “I want to live in a place where I can walk or bike just about anywhere within the city.” He suggested that “we start steering this city to be the amazing, hip, fit, bicycling capital of south Texas it ought to be.” Well, you know what, we can be that too.

Unlike decades past, Harlingen today is not just one thing, but many, and it is becoming much more to more and more people. It is diversity which makes us strong: an increasingly diversified economy, a wonderful mix of diverse cultures, and differing viewpoints that remind us and challenge us to make it an even better place, not just for those who live here today, but for generations to come.

The State of our City is strong, its foundations are strong, and its future is as bright as ever. Thank you for all that you do individually and collectively to make this a truly great community. May God bless our great Country and our State. God bless all of you. And may God continue to bless our beloved Harlingen. Thank you.

Chris Boswell, Mayor

City of Harlingen, Texas