

Good Afternoon, I would like to thank you all for attending today, and allowing me the opportunity to share the excitement around last year's accomplishments and what is ahead in 2019. First of all I would like to thank City staff on both the Government and Utility sides, none of this is possible without them, I would also like to thank our past and present City Councils for their hard work and due diligence making this growth and development possible. I would also like to thank our community partners that we have collaborated with over this past year: Fremont Area Chamber, Greater Fremont Development Council, Main Street Fremont, Dodge county Visitors Bureau, Community Foundation, Dodge County Board, Methodist Fremont Health, Midland University, Metro Community College, Fremont Public schools, Archbishop Bergan and the Fremont YMCA. Lastly, I would like to give a special thanks to my wife, Judy, for her continued support.

2018 has been a very busy and exciting year. It was a year of recognition.

- On February 18, 2018, the City of Fremont received the Community of the Year Award by the Nebraska Diplomats of the Greater Omaha Region; Governor Ricketts was on hand for this Presentation.
- In March, Site Selection Magazine, along with the State of Nebraska, the Omaha Metro region and Council Bluffs region of the Omaha Chamber Partnership, recognized us; this was for our accomplishment in Economic Development, primarily for the Costco/Lincoln Premium Poultry processing facility.
- In July, we received the Golden Spike award representing a 150 Year partnership with the Union Pacific Railroad and the impact this partnership has had on this region.
- The City also received the Doug Bereuter Most Accomplished Community Award for 2017-2018 during the Northeast Nebraska Economic Development Districts Annual Meeting in July.

I would like to thank the City Council, City Staff, City Employees and our community partners for working together to achieve these awards.

The Department of Utilities was recognized as well,

- The Department of Utilities received its first National Recognition for excellence in Public Power Reliability for 2017; in both transmission and distribution of power to its customers.
- We received The BEST TASTING WATER, TREATED for 2018 across the State of Nebraska, and the Wastewater Treatment Facility received the 2018 Scott Wilber Outstanding facility award and Silver safety award.
- Keith Kontor also received the Sydney Bedell Award for Extraordinary Personal Service to the Industry. Keith over-sees both the Water and Wastewater Treatment Departments.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all Utility Employees and Staff for all they do providing exceptional service each and every day to the citizens of Fremont.

In January, the Unified Development Code went into effect, after multiple years of work by the Planning Department and the Planning Commission; we now have an updated Zoning and Development Code. This is a fluid document that we will continue to work on and improve as time goes on.

In 2017 in Collaboration with GFDC, the Chamber and Dodge County we completed the Fremont Dodge County Housing study, based on the results received; developers, the Planning commission and City Council have worked hard this past year on several new Mixed Use developments.

Gallery 23, on East 23rd at Hwy 275 - Weather hampered them most of the construction season, however, they continued to work on their design and layout. At the beginning of the year, they formed Sanitary Improvement District #8 and signed the subdivision agreement that spells out all the details of the project build out. Late last summer, the developers were able to begin installing gas, water, sewer, electric, storm water drainage, and complete the grading of the interior roads; they have also been negotiating with the state for another East entrance off Hwy.30. The Department of Utilities have been busy ensuring service is on site as they are very anxious to begin both commercial and residential construction in early spring of 2019.

Don Peterson and Associates are developing Sun Ridge Development. This is located south of Military between Johnson and Luther and North of Jack Sutton Drive. This is a mixed-use development, the property has been re-zoned, and Council approved the final plat for the center and commercial portions of the project. They will begin with streets and residential build out in early spring 2019. Currently, it appears a bank and two medical offices will be building on the commercial lots, leaving one commercial lot remaining.

Morningside Crossing is at the corner of Johnson and Morningside. This is a high-density Housing project. The first phase will utilize Rural Workforce Housing dollars. The Rural Workforce housing fund was formed utilizing a matching grant from the Nebraska Economic Development. The forming of the fund is a collaborative effort including the City, GFDC, Community Foundation, Community of Scribner, Lincoln Premium Poultry, Fremont Beef, and Fremont Contract Carriers. It is exciting to see that we are utilizing public and private dollars to form this fund. The ground breaking on this project took place in early November.

Morningside Pointe is a development east of Deerfield and South of Morningside Road. This development will provide larger and more affordable lots. The layout is shovel ready and the developers will more than likely be breaking ground early this spring. The development will require the extension of Luther Road from Morningside south. The City will be building the new road and drainage infrastructure, the costs to cover this extension will be paid for out of LB840 infrastructure funds.

Other accomplishments and projects. Public works projects included:

- Completion of Historical decorative lighting, replacement of sidewalks and curbs and asphalt covering on Park Street from Military to 1st Street.
- Morningside intersection at Luther was refurbished along with underground infrastructure.
- Johnson Road trail was completed from Military to North of the St. Pats Catholic Church.
- Veterans Memorial parking lot provided much needed parking for the overall Memorial Park Complex.
- Cloverly Road re-alignment was necessary to improve traffic around the Lincoln Premium Poultry processing facility and the Southern corridor. It was completed in November.

In November, the city made their first installment to the State of Nebraska as they begin final drawings for the Southeast Beltway project. Construction is slated for spring of 2020 with completion in 2021

In May Fremont Citizens passed two of the three; \$2,000,000 Ballot initiatives.

- The first will be to expand the library. This will be a public/private funded project.

- The second was remodeling of the City Auditorium. Both projects will hopefully begin in 2019.

The Airport advisory board has been working extremely hard for over five years on a project to design and provide a new apron and terminal Building. This project requires State and Federal Airport Authority approval and Funding. We recently have tentative approval for this project. The plan will be to begin the apron project in 2019 and then follow up with the Terminal in 2020-2021. The airport is a Gateway to Fremont and it is extremely important to economic growth in our community.

The Parks Department completed a new Irrigation system in Ridge Cemetery. They are completing a new floor project in the Senior Center at Christensen Field. They also added a new Shelter at Ronin Park, along with serving the many programs through-out the year. In addition, Keep Fremont Beautiful recognized John Kuddes and Falyln Walkenhorst for all their hard work, on the City Parks and the Flower Beds.

Fremont and Dodge County agreed by resolution to continue working together to form a Joint Law Enforcement Center. The first step of this process was to sign an inter-local agreement and to secure land, this was completed in December. We plan to use 25 acres on the Northwest corner of the Business Data Park, the City will begin planning the first phase of the new center and the County will complete their share of this project in the future.

Shelly Holzerland, Director of our Joint Communications Center, oversaw the installation of the monitoring system over four Burlington Northern Crossings at Somers, 23rd Street, Linden, and Military Streets. This was done in conjunction with Texas A&M Transportation institute. The link to the Monitor Website is: <https://rr.fremontne.gov/railmonitor/>. Shelly was also was a recipient of the Nebraska Communication Association Laura Becker Memorial Award in 2018 for her service to the association.

In April, Solar Farm #1 came on line. 219 customers began using renewable power from the Solar Farm. The Second Solar Farm, built on the City Well Field, was dedicated in September. At the same time we also dedicated two Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, one located at the mall north of the Hy-Vee gas station and the second downtown in the parking lot across from the courthouse. We also dedicated the City's five new Kia Niro plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

The Department of Utilities has been busy as well. They began building out the services for Costco and Gallery 23, adding capacity at the Wastewater Treatment Plant with additional basins, new lagoons, and a new egg shaped digester. In February, the new ELKHORN Valley Transmission line will be completed. This was a joint project with Fremont and OPPD. When this line goes live, the project will enhance our Electric capacity and reliability for years to come.

In January, we also began using power generated from the Cottonwood I Wind Farm. This 90 Megawatt wind farm, with 52 turbines, is located 3 miles south of Blue Hill NE. Fremont's capacity is 41 Megawatts. Other communities purchasing power are Beatrice, South Sioux City and NPPD in Wayne NE.

Collaboration between the city and community partners played a big role in Economic Development projects this past year. The first of many include Nebraska Irrigated seeds

North of Fremont on the east side of Hwy 77. It is a 100,000-sqft temperature controlled warehouse.

Legacy Post and Beam, located in the Morningside Business Park, relocated from South Dakota.

Fremont Rental located at 353 West 23rd opened this spring.

American Underground, located in Morningside Business Park, currently moving in at this time.

Jayhawk Box Company, Phase 1 and 2 is currently under construction this is an eight million dollar expansion project.

Aldi's Ribbon Cutting took place in November

Infinite 8 Institute was dedicated in late October. This will be a drone software development company and training center for piloting and construction of drones.

We also welcomed .402 Sports and Entertainment LLC. They will be making renovations to Moller Field, which will not only be the home of the Midland Warriors but also the home to the new team called Fremont MOO! The first season for the new wood Bat League will begin this summer.

The Costco Lincoln Premium Poultry Processing plant is set to open September 2019 with a 48-week ramp up to full capacity. The Feed Mill completion will be between March -April 2019. The Hatchery will finish up during the May/June time frame also of 2019. We are extremely excited for the ancillary business that continues to locate in our region because of this project.

In December, the Sale of Hormel Foods to Wholestone Farms was completed. Wholestone is already partnering with the City of Fremont by purchasing approximately 2 million gallons of water per day for production. They will also be sharing cost on the new anaerobic lagoons currently being constructed. Over the next 3 years, they will be making over \$150 million worth of improvements to the facility. They are preparing for a double shift of production. When complete, they could be processing more than 6.2 million hogs per year.

In 2018, we also sold several lots at the Morningside Business Park. Kent Adams Construction, Teds Tarps and Covers, Jalsine Enterprises LLC. And currently, we are working on a pending sale to Western Integrated Seeds.

We also have a sales agreement pending with the Dodge county Humane Society. They will be purchasing the City's share of the facility. After they close on this transaction, they will be planning on a future expansion.

Lastly, in December, we said good-bye to Council members Scott Schaller, John Anderson and Steve Landholm. We want to thank them for their years of service. We then welcomed Brad Yerger: Ward 4, Mark Jensen: Ward 3 and Glen Ellis: Ward 2 to the Council. Councilman Mark Legband was re-elected serving Ward 1.

What's in store for 2019? Even though financially we begin 2019 extremely strong. The challenges we are facing will be in regards to increased Labor and Benefit costs, and the

possibility of becoming a Micropolitan community. Meaning our comparison community's will become Metro communities in lieu of cities like Columbus, Norfolk, Hastings, Grand Island, Sioux City and Scottsbluff. We will also need to continue to study the needs for both Police and Fire departments and their possible future growth.

Housing and Labor will be the other two needs that leadership will have to continue to focus on the next several years. We will also continue to focus on our infrastructure, including streets and roads. Storm water drainage will also be a major focus. We have begun discussions with the NRD and Dodge County to study solutions to prevent flooding during major rain events.

2018 was an extremely successful year for Fremont. It has taken considerable work and a collaborated effort by our City Council, City Staff, City and Utility Employees, GFDC, Chamber of Commerce, Dodge County and our many other community partners to insure our success for today and into the future. I look forward to a successful 2019 and thank each one of you for your support as well.