



STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS – 2017

Delivered by Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski - City Council, Monday, February 6, 2017

Madam President, members of the City Council,
and all the citizens of Lafayette.

It is my honor to deliver to you my State of the City
address.

I would like to begin with what I believe is most
important, to thank all our citizens, who are committed,
engaged and the cornerstone of our community. I would also
like to thank the Department Heads, Team Members, other
governments units, Purdue University and Ivy Tech for their
collaborative efforts.

One of the main responsibilities of the Council is to ensure the wise use of our tax dollars and fiscal responsibility. I am pleased to report that with all of us working together, we are doing just that. We continue to provide outstanding cost effective services, and strive to meet the benchmarks for financial standards that the investment banking world and the bond rating firms require.

As you have heard, the Governmental Finance Officers Association recommends that a City have a 15% emergency operating fund. Earlier this evening you approved the ordinance that transferred \$200,000.00 to the rainy day fund bringing that total to just slightly over 4 million dollars, representing 10.5% in emergency operating funds. This is significant in the fact that the rainy day fund when my

administration started in 2004 was \$11,200.00.

Our cash operating balances have increased toward the levels recommended by the GFOA. The City Departments adherence to Council approved budgets and the improved operating efficiencies of all our team members have produced sufficient cash balances.

We also have \$1.1 million dollars in reserve in our EDIT funds.

When you combine the rainy day fund with the EDIT reserve, we have \$5.1 million dollars in an emergency fund, which brings us to 13.8%. That is a significant accomplishment from where we started.

PUBLIC SAFETY

As this Council and our community knows our commitment to public safety never waivers, and that effort continues.

The Heroin and drug epidemic that is sweeping the United States continues to make headlines in large cities and small towns all across America. Back in September of 2015, we held a press conference to not only announce our initiatives, but to help start the community conversation, knowing full well that Law Enforcement cannot solve this problem alone, and the need for access to addiction services, mental health counseling, support from the medical community and the community as a whole was critical.

Since September, the Lafayette Police Department has

worked diligently to implement those initiatives and others, as well as work beyond law enforcement to involve other local entities focused on crime prevention and neighborhood safety.

Our take home patrol car program has been implemented and we currently have 42 Police vehicles in our neighborhoods. 16 of them have been achieved through the new program. We estimate over the next year we will add 6 patrol cars to that number, and up to 11 in 2018.

From a manpower standpoint it has been a very busy 24 months, but very productive. The Lafayette Police Department is currently at full staff of 142. This now allows two positions to be filled in the Street Crimes Unit, which made 818 arrests last year with just 5 members and will now have 7 members in that unit. We have filled a vacant position in the Drug Task Force and filled the new position, and two additional Officers will go

to the Crime Prevention Unit.

We discussed using the new state law regarding abandoned houses. In February 2016, the Lafayette Hearing Authority utilized that law to declare seven properties abandoned. Five of those properties became eligible for an abandoned property tax sale. Those five properties were certified to Tippecanoe County and in October 2016, the County conducted an abandoned property tax sale. All five properties were sold at that sale. The purchasers obtained a deed to the property at that time and the new owners have been able to start clean up and rehabilitation of those properties. If those properties had not been declared abandoned and had been sold at the traditional tax sale, purchasers would not receive a deed until 2018.

In January 2017, the process began again, seeking to declare eight properties abandoned. Four of those properties were declared and if the property taxes are delinquent after May 2017, they will be eligible to be certified. The remaining properties were not declared abandoned because after receiving the notice the City was seeking to declare the properties abandoned, several property owners contacted the City. Those owners advised they were taking steps to correct the deficiencies, and make necessary repairs. We are pleased with the progress.

We are now enforcing the maintenance portion of the BOCCA Code and have started in the Romig-Ellsworth neighborhood.

The Police Department continued its efforts on Community Outreach, building relationships and empowering our citizens.

Our Nextdoor platform continues to grow. We now reach 7,475 households, which represents 21% of all homes in Lafayette and we have 9353 individual members. Officers are attending neighborhood meetings and interacting with community groups. At our Training Center, we offer the Citizen's Police Academy, R.AD. for adults and for kids, a Junior Police Academy, and safety awareness classes for employees.

Sgt. Scott Galloway and Lt. Brian Gossard hosted numerous community meetings and awareness classes, discussing a variety of topics and engaging with residents and neighborhoods on many levels.

We also understand it's about people and opportunity, so the City partnered with Faith Church to develop the Hartford Hub in the Lincoln neighborhood, which has exceeded all our expectations in reaching out to children and families. Creating a new sense of community, hope and opportunity. It's about the role the City is playing in developing the new YMCA on the Ivy Tech campus. It's about working with the new owners of Romney Meadows (formerly Claystone) to create a new community and CDBG funds being used to establish a Head Start program at Romney Meadows to help the children, and working with Faith and several other agencies to create the Northend Community Center.

Partnering with the Centennial Neighborhood group, we removed a blighted City block and replaced it with townhomes.

We work closely with and help financially support Habitat for Humanity to create new homeownership opportunities.

Recently you saw us announce the partnership with Drury Inc. to replace the Knights Inn with a beautiful new seven story hotel, which is not only an economic benefit, but will solve some community safety concerns.

I am pleased to inform the Council that crime did decrease in Lafayette in 2016. We had a tremendous response from our citizens, when we asked them to help be our eyes and ears and to engage with us in making our community safer. The outpouring of support was remarkable and impactful.

Property crimes were down in every category and there were 315 less incidents, which was a 9% decrease.

Crimes against a person (violent crimes) were down in every category except robbery. There were 81 less incidents, which was a 20% decrease.

The total number of incidents of all crimes were down by 396, representing a 11% decrease in crime overall.

This is good news, but we know we have significant work ahead of us. Yet, we do believe that with the support and response from the community, the initiatives we are implementing and the community discussion on increasing access to addiction and mental health services, we are doing the right things and moving in the right direction.

Fire Department

The Lafayette Fire Department continues on a very

positive path. As you know, we implemented a seven year apparatus replacement plan. I wanted to bring you up to date on where we are: in 2013 we purchased a new Pierce Engine; in 2014 a Pierce 102 foot aerial ladder truck; in 2016 a Marion squad truck; and in 2017, we will receive a new Pierce Engine. We have purchased 8 new thermal imaging cameras over the last three years, and we recently upgraded 140 radios to a new digital format. In addition, we replaced all MSA self-contained breathing apparatus with the most advanced technology system available.

The Lafayette Fire Department also improved their ISO (Insurance Services Office) rating from a 3 to a 2. The scale that is used is 1-10, with 1 being the best score. I want to put that in perspective for you. There were 48,000 Fire Departments

rated. Only 132 of those received a 1 and only 1059 received a 2 out of that 48,000. That puts L.F.D. in the top 0.023% of all fire departments in the United States. That is phenomenal and has a very real benefit of effecting insurance rates in a positive way for our citizens and the businesses in our community.

2016 was another year of preserving and expanding our infrastructure. The Nothern and Southern Phases of Sagamore Parkway were completed, along with improvements to Greenbush Street, the Meyers bridge, renovations to Riehle Plaza, and South 18th Street. Four miles of roads in our neighborhoods were paved.

We also completed the renovations to the Long Center, and improvements to the City Parking Garage.

Our main project downtown, Streetscape, will be finished this spring.

The new Marq building continues to take shape and in 2016 we broke ground on our first major project through the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation – our Riverfront Promenade, which was made possible by a generous grant from North Central Health Services.

We are also nearing full installation of our Bicentennial art piece at Second and Main Street.

Improvements were made on Memorial Island and the installation of a monument to honor our Veterans from the Vietnam War was completed last summer. We thank everyone who helped make that possible.

Loeb Stadium hosted the first season of the Lafayette Aviators, which was a success.

We opened a completely renovated and expanded park in Sterling Heights, and created new pickle ball courts at McCaw, and with the recent completion of several projects, the City has slightly over 26 miles of paved trails.

2016 was another strong year for economic development. S.I.A. completed the hiring of the 1200 new associates. G.E. started their new maintenance repair and overhaul project and the first new engines were shipped. Sanoh America, Inc., a S.I.A. supplier, opened a facility in Lafayette. Arconic, formerly Alcoa, announced they would be adding a new \$30 million dollar press and hiring 26 new employees. Passageways announced the hiring of 25 new employees in downtown

Lafayette. Caterpillar Logistics started construction on their new facility. Alorica also announced the hiring of new associates.

The City of Lafayette supported Workforce Development efforts through Greater Lafayette Commerce including a talent attraction strategy focusing on veterans, a manufacturing expo that focused on careers and manufacturing processes which was attended by 600 middle and high school students, and manufacturing tours which was attended by 700 students.

Our Engineering Department processed 2,364 permits, which is a record number.

The total capital investment for our area was approximately \$600 million dollars.

CONCLUSION:

The good news – we are starting off 2017 in a very positive way. The third and final phase of Sagamore Parkway is out to bid. The Brown Street C.S.O. project and the 4.7 million gallon underground storage tank will begin this year. We will continue work on Memorial Island and install a new playground at McCaw Park. Planning continues for the new stadium.

Together, we continue to move Lafayette forward. We are financially stable. Crime is down. Economic Development is strong. Private investment is strong. We continue to provide outstanding City services. Our School Corporation is growing, and most importantly, our citizens are engaged and committed. Because of the unwavering

commitment of our community members, our future is very
bright.