

State of the City Address—2022

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Centerton City Council, and fellow citizens as your Mayor I am honored to report to you the state of the city and its future needs. I am grateful for the opportunity that the citizens have given me to serve the citizens of the City of Centerton over the past 12 years as your mayor. First of all, I am happy to announce that the City of Centerton is financially sound, and thru fiscal conservation, your staff and City Council who are good stewards of the taxpayer's money has balanced its budget over the past 12 years. The 2021 financial statement has been presented, and as you seen we are in a good financial condition.

2021 has been a challenge with COVID-19 for our employees, but everyone has taken precautions by the use of protective equipment and following the COVID protocols. But we have continued to see new storefront and home-based businesses in our community. In 2021 the city issued 170 business licenses and we seen several new businesses open up in 2021. The city is also aware of over 120 home-based businesses also in our community for a total of 300 individuals doing business in our community. The 2020 census has been received by the city and our current population is 17,792 which is a 87 percent increase from the 2010 census and makes us the 25th largest city in Arkansas and the 5th largest city in our area.

Stay tuned for updates on many more new businesses coming to our growing community as we have several under construction and several making inquiries to be part of our community.

Next, I would like to report on multiple road projects going on in and around our city, first the Traffic Light installation at Main Street and Seba/Town View Road is complete and operational, there were delays due to the height of the electric wires and the pole height on the Northwest corner and ARDOT and the contractor have been working together to resolve this issue. The city is working with the City of Bentonville to redesign Greenhouse Road and the engineer is in the process of designing the road and there will be additional information provided to the community as we receive the information.

The city is also working with ARDOT on the expansion of Highway 102, West Centerton Blvd from Main Street to Highway 279 south. The project was set to go out for bid in September 2023, however the plan showed a roundabout near Sun Meadow Drive, which would cause 5 local businesses to be displaced, I am working with ARDOT for alternative solutions for this location and a public hearing will be coming soon for the residents to offer input. The project will include 5 lanes and sidewalk on both sides of the roadway, the sidewalk on the south side of the road will be a 10-foot side path which the city has agreed to help fund. This will offer additional sidewalk in our community.

The Public Works Department have placed new asphalt in overlays and newly constructed roadway sections. Also new gravel base was installed maintaining our existing roads and in constructing new roadway sections. The city has worked to add amenities to our Sports Complex, we have added new benches, and picnic tables throughout the city, we constructed a new full basketball court, dog park and parking area. The splash pad has been completed and the first season was successful. We have added new equipment to our fleet making our work more productive and safer.

Our Planning department has been very busy with several projects active at one time, at any given time there are 12-15 different subdivisions, and several commercial projects are in some phase of development. The city has also adopted several updated codes as the city continues to grow this will give a direction for the future. The Planning department due to the workload has added an additional planner and currently the planning department is at full staff. The city has also hired a staff engineer to assist the different departments and help move project forward and work with staff and developers.

Centerton has seen a huge impact on building in our city with a total of nearly 8000 inspections in 2021, with a total of almost \$1,000,000 in building permit fees for the year, we have seen a huge increase in 2021 of many commercial projects coming to the city with many more services and restaurants coming to our community. For 2021 we had 596 new residential permits and 9 commercial permits, also most permits now are done online, along with scheduling which streamlines the process.

The Code Enforcement division has been extremely busy with a large number of grass complaints in 2021 along with a large number of sidewalk inspections, since implemented the officer has been very proactive in identifying violators, which has kept the number of complaints down for the year.

The city has given away over 500 trees in October and also received over 500 trees thanks to a grant from the Wal Mart Family Foundation, which has really enhanced the appearance of the community with another group of trees planning to be given away during Arbor Day.

The Centerton Police Department recorded over 17,065 total calls for service and the department has recently changed radio systems to the Arkansas Wireless Information Network (AWIN) and all radios have been installed and issued to the officers.

The Centerton Fire Department responded to over 1589 calls for service in 2021 and is currently staffed with 23 full time firefighters and 5 part time fire fighters and 5 volunteers. Training continues on a continuous basis and our department hosts training on a regular basis. The city added ambulance service to the community with a contract with Northwest Hospital to house 2

ambulances in the city. The city is currently working to add living quarters to Station 2 on Highway 72 to house an ambulance and crew at this location. The department has been working hard with ISO and the fire rating is now ISO 2, with a goal of going to ISO 1 with the addition of future training facility for both the police and fire departments.

The Centerton Water and Sewer Department has completed construction on a 3-million-gallon water tank and is currently upsizing water lines near the tower site and also installing new sewer service in our southern service area.

Centerton Animal Control, in 2021 had 190 impounds of Centerton dogs and 215 impounds of Bentonville dogs, the partnership with the city of Bentonville has been great and many owners are able to reunite with their pets, also the shelter had 159 adoptions and 227 were released to their owner. The shelter uses Facebook to post dogs picked up and there is a great response from the community not only reuniting pets but also adopting them from the shelter, also the shelter is featured once a month on KNWA pet of the month and also on KFSM Channel 5.

The city has the City Hall and Court Facility is complete and we are finishing up moving into the new offices.

Lastly, I appreciate the opportunity to work with each of you and for the citizens of our community over the past 12 years, and no administration is complete without the support of the Centerton City Council and a loyal staff of great employees, and our city has many hard-working employees from the Department heads to the troops that carry out the daily activities and duties to help keep our city running smooth and efficiently. Thanks for a Job Well Done!!!