

## **2021 State of the City Address**

**It is my honor tonight to present the State of the City Address.**

**I would like to begin by thanking our City Employees for their dedication and commitment to make Farmington a better place to live. The year 2020 has presented many new challenges in the way we conducted business due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Our City Staff, Police and Fire Departments, Public Works department and Library staff were very quick to adapt to and overcome these challenges.**

**I would like to also thank our City Council, Elected Officials, and Planning Commission for making the necessary adjustments to keep our City operating in a very efficient manner. I believe 2021 will also be a year of challenges from the COVID-19, so I want our City to be proactive in working together to continue providing the services needed to our Citizens.**

**I am pleased to report that our City is financially sound and we have maintained excellent cash reserves. Our City and County sales taxes continue to increase each year. Our City Sales taxes increased by 20.01% and our State taxes increased by 7.99% in 2020. This increase allows our City to have funds to support the expansion of our City services and for Capital improvement projects to begin and be completed with out interruption. Our City will continue to budget very conservatively regarding income growth and maintain a tight control regarding operating expenses for each department.**

**Our City completed several Capital Improvement projects in 2020:**

- **Expansion and remodel of the City Library**
- **Expansion of the Police Department area of City Hall**
- **Double Springs road widening and drainage improvements from Hwy 62 to Rheas Mill road.**
- **Upgraded drainage on Ash Street**

**Our City will have 2 main Capital Improvement Projects to begin in 2021:**

- **Completion of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of Hwy 170 expansion with utilities relocated and the bidding and beginning of the road construction project in 2021. The construction of the road improvements will take 2 years to be completed.**
- **Drainage improvements on Garland McKee Road and Meadowsweet subdivision to bid in early 2021 and be completed in 2021.**

**We will continue to monitor our streets and drainage areas for needed repairs during the year.**

Our City continues to experience tremendous growth in our Residential and Commercial areas of our City. I am excited and encouraged about businesses who have located to our City and others who have expressed an interest to expand or relocate to Farmington. The growth in our residential areas will spur the expansion of businesses to our City.

In 2020, Our City issued 156 Single Family permits valued at \$45,261,000, 22 multi family permits valued at \$13,090,000 and 4 Commercial permits valued at \$1,768,000.

The total amount of permits issued which includes all building permits, mechanical permits, plumbing, heating & air permits, sign permits and miscellaneous permits totaled 991 permits which generated permit fees of \$251,550. This amount was 250% greater than our budgeted amount (\$100,000) for building fees in 2020.

Our Residential growth is extremely active with 874 residential lots approved, under construction or available for the construction of new homes and 870 lots being proposed or in the planning stages. The residential lots represent 11 new subdivisions in the Farmington City Limits. This growth exhibits the confidence that builders have in our City and our School system and that Farmington has become a very attractive place for families to locate.

With the Commitment from our City Council, our Fire and Police departments will need to continue to grow in personnel so that our residents will have the added security that Farmington is a safe place to live. Also we will need a commitment to continue to expand our recreational facilities and trails.

2020 was a Census year and our City was ranked in the top 5 cities in the State of Arkansas in percentage of participation. We hope to have results of the Census in the first quarter of 2021 but with the Covid 19 situation it may be in the second quarter before we know the results.

I think it is imperative in 2021 , that our City makes a commitment to work with our School, Chamber and Civic organizations to help build Farmington into a more attractive place for families and businesses to locate.

In closing, I would like to thank the citizens of Farmington for their continued support of our City and to celebrate and be proud of the great community of Farmington. God has blessed our City and we should be thankful every day for these blessings.

I am very proud and honored to be your Mayor and I look forward to a very successful and prosperous 2021 for the City of Farmington.



Mayor Ernie L Penn