

City Of Washington



2021 STATE OF THE CITY

Presented by Mayor David Rhoads
February 08, 2021

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2021 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS
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Good evening. As I begin my State of the City address after completing my first year as Mayor of the City of Washington, I see many things happening within our community, and I will be addressing a few of them throughout my address.

As most everyone knows this administration had acquired two major projects. The first being the Business 50 Project. This project started with Phase I, at the eastside roundabout section which has already been completed. This spring, Phase II, the westside section of this project got underway. This portion begins at S.E. 3rd Street and proceeds west ending near 900 W. National Hwy. In March 2020 we began preparing for the letting of bids for the \$4.2 million dollar project. We received \$408,302 from the Community Crossings Match Grant, which was awarded in April 2020 and then the bid was awarded in June 2020. The project got started in July. As I speak today the road is at 40%, sewer is at 93% and the Water is 94 % complete. Driveways are at 32% curbs and gutters are 60% and sidewalks are 20%. This all began on the southside of the road. We have also purchased the property at 501 South Meridian Street, and the structure has been removed to complete the Meridian Street intersection. This project is going well, and we look forward to completing this phase of the 3-phase project this April 2021.

The next project also slated to begin in spring was the \$2 million dollar Wastewater Phosphorus Removal Project. This was mandated by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). As part of this project the city was allowed to construct a new wastewater facility building that will house a new laboratory and other administration offices, which have been needed for quite some time. The City was awarded \$700,000 from OCRA in January 2020. Bids were opened in April 2020 and were awarded in May with construction beginning in June 2020. I am proud to announce this project was completed this January 2021.

Other Projects: Highway 57 & Meridian Street INDOT project, which started in June 2020 and finished up on August 7th. This change allows traffic enter Highway 57 in a much safer manner.

- * Completion of Hazel street
- * Street paving totaling \$350,000 in the west end of Washington
- * Sidewalk replacement program still is still vital to our citizens
- * Nasco expansion/remodel was completed in June 2020
- * Jamestown square upgrades are almost complete
- * Williams Bros. True Rx announcement of expansion
- * Huck's convenient store is now open at I-69
- * Tokheim property clean-up continues to move forward
- * Commons Project downtown Washington
- * Capital improvement financial plan is in place this year

As you see we have been busy with meeting some of my goals after taking office, and we will continue making great strides in the coming year to help improve our community.

If anyone would like a copy of the Department Head Annual Reports please let me know. We will be happy to make that happen. Below are some highlights from each report that I wanted to share.

* Animal Control Dept. - 700 animals were brought into the facility in 2020 with 63% of the animals were from surrounding areas, with 37 % coming from the City of Washington. There were 50 dogs and cats adopted out from the shelter.

* Electric Dept. - 56 new remote meters were installed in 2020, with work orders consisting of the setting of 49 new poles and removing of 55 old poles; 104 new services were installed with 637 maintenance related orders, including new transformers and customer meter services. They had 396 work orders on outages that included electric line related incidents. The tree crew handled 897 work orders and had 465 overtime callouts in 2020.

* Fire Dept. - responded to 749 calls in 2020 which was done considerably from the previous years due to Covid-19. 3 new firefighters were hired in 2020 and they completed 1220 hours of Fire/EMS training during last year. They handled 18 structure fires, with 8 of them being call-in fires that required additional firemen to respond.

* Parks Dept. - the park crew was very busy as usual with 85,000+ Christmas lights being hung throughout the park and of course with all the mowing and other maintenance that goes on all year long. There were 28 new cherry trees planted, which is annual event. Other events were the July 4th Celebration, Food Truck Tuesdays, and of course Christmas in the Park. These events are always a big hit. The parking lot was completely repaved; Park Department office was completely remodeled at eastside; new playground equipment installed at Longfellow. The crew took care of regular maintenance at these parks, South Park, the War Memorial, and the Waterpark.

* Police Dept. - responded to 15,112 complaints, 1,503 911 calls, 707 EMS calls, 433 accidents, 891 total arrests with 1,438 charges filed and 1293 total tickets issued. The Assistant Chief's report showed he had 30.5 training hours, secured over \$15,000 in grant money, received over \$4,000 in donations towards the School Resource Officer's new vehicle wrap; worked with detectives on donations and drug money seized through the Drug Task Force, and continues to work on combined dispatch. Helped in getting over \$70,000 for the COVID-19 Cares Act money for the department and City Call. The Detective Division has 3 detectives and they logged 150.5 hours of continuing education, worked 202 investigations, and completed 193 arrests at a 95.5% rate. They had 4 callouts working 657.5 combined overtime hours, with a total of 150.50 training hours. Detective Sergeant Garland continues working with the DEA Task Force having 388.5 hours overtime in 2020, leading to the seizure of multiple amounts of drugs that were likely to supply Daviess County. The departments total training hours were 1770, with 152 hours attending outside schools. Washington Police continue working 2 police K-9 dogs with 48 arrests.

* Street, MVH Depts. - continues in providing a great service to the citizens with R.O.W maintenance, replacing street and stop signs, adding many tons of rock and hot mix, repairing many potholes throughout the city, leaf pick up, stumps, grass orders, etc. We paved over 2 miles of streets for approximately \$350,000 and added 21.93 miles of crack seal on city streets. Refurbished 2 trucks that saved the city approximately \$190,000 if new trucks had to be purchased.

* Transit Dept. - installed GPS on all 3 buses that will give dispatch real time data on the bus location while improving the safety of the driver and passengers by eliminating frequent calls to the bus. There were 246 operating days logged and a total of 7904 riders. This was down some 18,489 due to Covid-19.

* Garbage & Trash Dept. - during leaf pick up they made 2 rounds plus 1 round in alley ways collecting 272 tons of leaves; removed and donated 158 Christmas trees to local citizens for pond; 292 tons of grass and yard waste was brought to the recycle center with 322 tons of compost. 2003 limb call-ins were received with only 931-man hours which was down from 3846 call-ins and 3925-man hours in 2019. The department handled 114 extra trash and appliance pick up calls, made 784 trips to Daviess County Landfill with 5084 tons of household trash.

* Recycle Dept. - 7331 residents and businesses utilized the recycle center with 100 tons of cardboard, plastics, paper, books, steel, aluminum cans and newspapers collected and kept from going to the landfill.

* Utilities Dept. - there were 96,724 bills processed in this department. We continue to log gas and diesel usage for off road fuel tax refunds totally \$5939.06 going back to the city. The Utility office wrote off \$31,939.58 in uncollectable accounts since 2015 that includes accidents, bankruptcies, and deceased customers' accounts. We had 54 small claim and sewer liens and recovered \$4432.66 in small claims, \$12,151.68 in sewer bills, and \$4,449.71 in outstanding accounts. Credit cards had a 43% increase in use from 2019.

* Water Dept. - installed 74 new water meters with 30 of them being new taps, replaced 8 fire hydrants and repaired 7 of them. There were 19 repaired water mains with 27 repaired service lines that were leaking. Replaced 7 lead service lines and replaced 1100 feet of 4" water main from the roadway to the edge of the road on 150 south and completed the westside highway project replacing 6" water main with 8" and new service lines.

* HHW Dept. - in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic dampened our ways of doing business and reflected our ability of how we disposed of the HHW products but saying that we still handled 47.538 tons total of hazard waste which is about half of 2019 numbers. This service that we provide for our community cost us approximately \$7,900.00, but the most important part of this service is keeping this much product out of our local landfill.

* Wastewater/Stormwater Dept. - this report is like so many other departments with this year's COVID-19 with maintenance being a key component; with the rebuild of the centrifuge, and the rebuild of the east clarifier, several pumps that were changed out and the continuing clean-up of the wetland area, 2020 has been busy. The opening of the new phosphorus facility is coming soon and will better serve the community. Water treatment is always a big concern for the city. In 2020 they treated and discharged 1,304 Milligrams of clean water into Hawkins creek with an average flow of 3.57 MGD. There was 1303.14 tons of bio-solids hauled to the landfill and we had only 3 overflows in 2020 compared to 6 in 2018 and 4 in 2019. We are always committed to provide the best service possible. The street sweeper operated 279 days in 2020 gathered 303 loads with a total of 691 tons of material, making 6 complete rounds throughout the city. Scott's plans are to continue to promote and educate the citizens in litter and trash control which will lower the volume for the street sweeper and keep our streets looking better.

* Building Commissioner - as I highlight this report, I feel like this department has moved and helped our community in a good direction in 2020. What they have accomplished is far more than what I am reporting on tonight. In 2020 improvement permits totaled 363 which is up from 285 in 2019; re-roofing permits were at 80 and that is up 27 in 2019. Residential additions were 52 an increase of 21 from 2019, with an estimated dollar value of \$2,8 million. They did 316 inspections in 2020, 42 demolition permits were issued, 36 special variances, with 15 conditional uses/rezones approved. There were 8 residential homeowners and 1 commercial business that took advantage of the sidewalk replacement program.

* Code Enforcement - This is a thankless job and Brandt has done a great job. There were 925 clean-up orders, 488 total yard clean-up orders; 430 done by our citizens; 210 trash orders with 199 again done by our citizens. I think this shows others dedication in keeping Washington a cleaner and "better place to live". He issued 172 abandoned vehicle notices showing we continue to clean the city up. I want to thank the community in showing pride in our City.

* I.T - had 8 major projects in 2020 that included a City Hall project that was quite extensive and dealing with the everyday needs from all departments throughout the City, which can be quite demanding.

And then there was COVID-19 which began in late February 2020. It is something that I never would have seen coming, what? a pandemic? This is something we have dealt with all year; with Daviess County deaths being in the sixty's and touching home with me personally. We are still dealing with it today. It was quite a year, but the City of Washington did not have any employees lose their jobs and there were no layoffs due to COVID. We received a PPE Grant for supplies and safety equipment; new City Hall/Mayor's Office intercom systems for the safety of our employees and citizens of Washington during COVID and with the help of SIDC and Daviess County Economic Development Corporation we received a \$250,000 Phase 2 Small Business Grant in October 2020 and implemented this program in December to assist city businesses with the economic downfall.

I could not go without recognizing my Executive Assistant and Clerk-Treasurer's Office staff, as they play a vital role in the operations of the city and help me continue moving the City of Washington forward. I am proud to represent the City of Washington as your Mayor.

Thank you to our City Council, Board of Public Works & Safety members, and to our City Attorney. I would also like to thank my Department Heads, as well as all our city employees who all serve this community so well. A big thank you goes out to my wife Darlene and all my family for their continuing support.

I truly believe in our community and its future and will continue to work united with the county government and our citizens, for our future. Let us all truly believe in our community and all "Work for a better Washington". May God continue to bless the City of Washington and the United States of America.

Thank You!!

Mayor David E. Rhoads