

**State of the City
February 14, 2018
Mayor Nan Whaley**



A Labor of Love

State of the City 2018

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Good Morning.

Members of the City Commission, City Manager Dickstein, distinguished guests, members of the city staff, friends and neighbors:

Happy Valentine's Day!

Valentine's Day is a day of love – a day that's been set aside to express affection and appreciation for those who have touched our lives in a special way. It's been estimated that about 190 million valentines are sent out each year in the U.S., and when you add in the valentine cards exchanged in school activities, the amount reaches 1 billion!

I loved exchanging Valentine's Day cards with my friends when I was a little girl. Now, getting chocolates or some pretty flowers from Sam is always appreciated. Whatever the way we show our appreciation or love, February 14th is a great day to show it.

So it is fitting that this year's State of the City address should fall on Valentine's Day. It's an honor to share with you this review of the city we all love, and to highlight our accomplishments, our challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead.

This past year we witnessed strong job creation in Dayton, both in the creation of new businesses and through investment in current employers. Additionally, much has been done to build our entrepreneurship culture.

The City partnered with the Entrepreneurs Center, the Dayton Development Coalition and the Downtown Dayton Partnership on “Start Downtown” and “Accelerate Dayton.” These programs give consulting help to companies, and potential companies, in all corners of our city.

A partnership between the Dayton Minority Business Assistance Center and Wright State University was awarded a \$50,000 grant from Fifth Third Bank to provide technical assistance to clients seeking business certification. This allows small businesses to have a leg up when competing for state and federal contracts.

Because of the terrific work of the Human Relations Council and our purchasing and public works department the city is walking the talk with these efforts locally as well. Nearly one fourth of the City’s construction contracts were awarded to certified Small Businesses, Minority Owned Businesses, Women Owned Businesses and Dayton Local Small Businesses.

And, we are pleased with the newly opened innovation center at 444 East Second Street that includes the Air Force Research Lab. This project is exactly what Commissioner Joseph envisioned, bringing the assets of Wright Patterson Air Force Base downtown. Just spend a little time at the fourth Friday Coworking at 444 and you will love seeing the collaboration, innovation and invention that is being created here in Dayton.

Last summer, the City partnered with the regional film commission to support filming of a major motion picture, “The Old Man and the Gun” in the Liberty Tower in Downtown Dayton. In addition to the positive impact film production can have on our local economy, many Daytonians had fun hoping to spot their “secret loves” Danny Glover and Robert Redford on downtown streets and local eateries.

The investment in our city this past year was impressive. Here are just a few examples:

- Dayton Children’s opened its new 260,000 square foot patient tower in Old North Dayton in June. The tower houses in-patient and out-patient services, and represents a \$168 million investment.
- Dayton’s new \$64 million Main Branch of the Dayton Metro Library opened in August.
- CODE Credit Union completed its headquarters expansion project on Monument Avenue, overlooking the Great Miami River.
- Manufacturing firm Composite Advantage purchased the former Firestone tire warehouse in West Dayton, and
- STP Products opened its 570,000 square foot facility at the Dayton International Airport.

The housing market is rebounding from the Great Recession and Downtown and the neighborhoods surrounding the urban center continue to be one of the hottest areas around. The walkability, amenities, diversity and inclusivity is driving this market. There is simply no other place like downtown Dayton in the rest of the region.

The Flats at South Park are complete and have transformed Warren Street, with more housing just approved by the City Commission last month for this development. Charlie Simms Development continues work on several townhouse projects, including Monument Walk, Brownstones at Second and City View. Water Street Development continues to expand, with 54 additional units nearing completion. The former DELCO factory has been transformed into 130 apartment units and Lock 27 overlooking the plaza at Fifth Third Field. Try a pierogi and a beer before the next Dragons game. I'm sure you will love it!

We expect this development to continue in 2018.

Construction should be completed in 2019 on the new CareSource office tower on East First Street, which will house 900 employees. The investment in Dayton and CareSource has transformed the east side of downtown. When the new office building is complete, a company that started in a closet at Miami Valley Hospital will own 3 buildings and employ over 2,400 people in downtown.

And we know CareSource had choices on whether to invest in Dayton. They now provide services throughout Ohio and in multiple states. Their growth and their success have been breathtaking. Pam Morris, the CEO and founder of CareSource, believed in Dayton and in her company's growth. And, she knew they were connected. Her commitment and love for Dayton over the past 30 years has changed the course of our city's history.

Pam has announced she will be retiring this May. We are excited for her and are so grateful for her belief in our city. We all wish Pam the best as she begins this new chapter in her life.

The Levitt Pavilion completed fundraising efforts for the state-of-the-art music venue at Dave Hall Plaza in the heart of Downtown Dayton. Construction began earlier this year.

Two hotels are expected to open this year. The Holiday Inn Express is nearing completion on Edwin C. Moses and construction on the 98 room Fairfield Inn and Suites continues at the successful Water Street Development.

The Dayton Arcade renovation project attracted \$9 million in historic tax credits in 2017, bringing the project closer to securing the \$90 million necessary to reinvent the storied property. For a few decades the Arcade has been living on love alone. We are very close to seeing this building have a new story with both new and older generations getting the chance to fall in love with it all over again.

Dayton has been able to invest in its neighborhoods like never before because of the love our voters showed for the city in 2016.

We paved over 60 lane miles of residential streets in 2017. This is the most residential paving completed in one year that has occurred in the last forty years. We are on track after the first year to keep our promise of every residential road being in satisfactory condition at the end of the eight-year cycle.

Our streets are looking and feeling better and so are our neighborhoods because of the Your Dollars Your Neighborhood Program. We were able to mow vacant properties every month, making a significant difference to both the look and safety of all of Dayton's neighborhoods. Our parks are getting a much needed facelift. We were able to increase the number of police officers because of Daytonians love of their city.

We will continue with our work on the Your Dollars Your Neighborhood program through 2018. And, we want to be transparent in this process. That is why I am so proud of the dashboard in place for citizens to get real time data on this work. You can go to our website's front page at daytonohio.gov and see how much money has been encumbered and data around all of these programs. You can even see which lots have been mowed and how far along we are in each cycle in real time!

We have made great progress and expect to continue to see growth in Dayton, but much of the growth we have experienced is uneven. The inequality in market forces can be seen throughout the Dayton region. And nowhere is it seen more glaringly than in West Dayton.

The announcement of the closing of Good Samaritan Hospital was one of the toughest days I have had as mayor. Good Samaritan has had significant impact on the neighborhoods that surround the hospital. It is why the city has invested nearly \$12 million dollars in those neighborhoods and why we have seen nearly \$64 million dollars of investment in northern Salem Avenue.

Further, the commissioners and I are very concerned about health access for the residents who live in the northern and western parts of Dayton and

Montgomery County. Good Samaritan reports nearly 60,000 emergency room visits every year. The closing of Good Sam will affect access to health care for thousands of Daytonians.

In addition to the economic and health access concerns, the loss of the hospital has been an emotional blow as well. The stories people have shared with me about what the hospital has meant to their lives has been touching.

I received calls from many of the ministers in West Dayton, concerned about the impact this would have on their members, neighbors, and friends. Their activism and leadership on this issue has been essential to communicating the community's voice. One particular call, from Pastor Washington from Phillip's Temple really struck a chord. He told me how his entire family has been born at Good Sam. How they relied on the facility for care and services. For many Daytonians this announcement has felt no less than like a death in their family.

After loss, it is difficult to move forward, but move forward we must. The city commission is committed to doing everything in our power to make sure that access to health care is addressed with this closing. We are grateful for the help of Jeff Cooper and Public Health as well as the leadership at Five Rivers Health clinic to help guide us in this important work.

The city will work to make sure the community has meaningful input with the redevelopment of the Good Samaritan site. We will use all of our tools to make sure these two objectives are met.

Talking about health, we have lots to do in West Dayton. And it doesn't stop at hospitals and health care. The access to healthy foods is needed and again, we are disappointed in the lack of leadership coming from private companies on this front.

The Gem City Market saw a need in our community and is endeavoring to meet this need. It is working to locate a vibrant, community-centered, full-service grocery store along lower Salem Avenue. The store will feature affordable, quality, kitchen staples, including well-stocked fresh produce and meat departments, as well as specialty, local and organic products that make the store a unique draw.

Under the terrific leadership of Lela Klein, the Gem City Board recognized the asset they had in the neighborhoods and in the people of Dayton and went to work to bring us together to solve this incredible need in our city.

This is the model we will have to get more comfortable with in Dayton. It is going to take all of us pulling together and thinking differently about how we address these tough issues that have plagued our community for decades.

The Gem City Market needs our help and support. And I, too, believe in the heart and determination of Daytonians. And I look forward to the day when my groceries come from the Gem City Market.

The West Dayton framework under the leadership of Commissioner Shaw and John Lumpkin is a crucial element as we continue the HUD Choice neighborhood grant. The work is broad and deep, encompassing 18 Dayton neighborhoods and being holistic in the needs of the neighborhoods and the people who live there.

Already this work is making a real difference. The clean-up of Lakeside Lake with the partnership of the Ohio AFL-CIO is stunning, with more amenities coming this year. This past year's Porch Tours were held in neighborhoods that previously had no organization. Community members are taking ownership of their neighborhood. And it is making these neighborhoods stronger.

Another major challenge I want to address today is the opioid epidemic. With the prevalence of fentanyl in our community, we had the highest death rate for accidental overdoses last year in our history -- a 35% increase in deaths from 2016.

Dayton's public safety forces responded to over 3,400 calls for service related to overdoses last year. Since 2015, the City of Dayton has administered almost 23,000 doses of Narcan throughout Dayton. And, in 2017, the county's CarePoint harm reduction needle exchange program exchanged over 125,000 needles, a nearly 60% increase from 2016.

The numbers are so staggering we often become desensitized to the tragic consequences of this crisis. But for many of us it is too personal.

For me, it got personal in 2008 when I learned that a young man whose family lived two streets away from my family's home when I was growing up, who I used to babysit when he was 5 and I was 13, died from an overdose at the age of 23.

Or it was the call I got a few months ago telling me a family friend that I've known for more than 20 years had OD'd twice in one week in one of our local parks. This is a young man with a good-paying job, a young man who had

served our nation in the armed forces and now had a family of his own. It took four doses of Narcan to revive him.

Nearly every week, almost every day, I encounter a personal story of loss to the opioid epidemic. All are different, but many have similar threads. One that nearly 80% of all the stories have is where it all started: with a prescription pain reliever.

That is why in June Dayton was the fourth city in the nation and first in Ohio to file suit against the drug manufacturers, distributors and doctors who started this mess. Today over a hundred cities and counties across the country have followed Dayton's lead. Right now taxpayers are paying for this clean up. It is time we hold those who started this epidemic accountable for it.

Because this epidemic has hit our community harder than anywhere else in the nation, we are learning and acting faster than anywhere else in the country. The work of the Community Overdose Action Team that was created in 2016 has provided a county-wide table for us to collectively work on the epidemic. And it is allowing us to deploy resources quickly and effectively.

The Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association is looking at a better way to serve individuals with addiction, dependence, and mental health issues. People who suffer from one or all of these diseases often are shuffling between the healthcare, criminal justice and treatment systems. This is not the best method of intervention, and can become a drain on resources. GDAHA is working with local health systems to identify ways to

streamline these services into a one-stop-shop of sorts, where someone can be evaluated and directly connected with the resources they need. This innovative view of healthcare could have a profound impact on the friends, family, and neighbors who are struggling in our community.

These are just a few examples of the work the community is doing to combat this disaster. It will continue to take all of us to weather this epidemic and come out on the other side with a system and community that treats addiction like the illness it is.

The opioid epidemic is tragic. This city has had to face other tragedies and hardships in the past. But, as I have said many times, the people of Dayton know how to rise to the occasion and face their challenges head-on.

As we continue the work to rebuild our city from the challenges of the Great Recession, we know that providing our children with high-quality educational opportunities is extremely important. It is our most urgent economic development strategy. That's why when I began my first term as mayor I called for Dayton to become a City of Learners.

That call left many city staffers and citizens scratching their heads. While the city and the mayor have no governing authority over the Dayton school system of public and charter schools, I believed then and continue to believe now that it is the mayor's role to call on our community to work on issues in all our schools that are critical to the well-being of our city. Our education system surely determines Dayton's future.

In these past four year's much has been done.

We have defined quality in mentorship and after-school programs. We have begun the work of aligning our workforce needs with our K through 14 system. And, we have begun offering high quality pre-K to every four-year-old in our city. Robyn Lightcap and her team continue to show great progress with this pre-school work. We are offering tuition assistance to families so they can afford pre-school for their children. We have 50 pre-schools across the city that are opting into the pre-school promise. The teachers in these schools are receiving coaching skills and getting help as they focus on QUALITY programming for our city's youngest learners. Other cities are regularly coming to Dayton to see the amazing work that is underway by Robyn and her team.

At last year's City of Learners yearly report, I said that K-12 was the toughest part of the City of Learners work. I am happy to report much progress has been made since last August.

First, the relationship between the city and the board of education is the strongest I have seen in my twelve years at City Hall. School board members and commissioners are in constant dialogue, working together in partnership to improve Dayton schools' performance and quality. Under superintendent Libbie Lollie's leadership we are all now singularly focused on providing a high-quality education to all of Dayton's children.

The high quality sub-committee of City of Learners has refocused with the help of Dayton Public Schools to work on six ambitious outcomes for 2018:

- Enhancing teacher quality for new teachers.

- Establishing a cadre of professional staff members who are focused on addressing equity issues.
- Increasing FAFSA completion rates within Dayton high schools.
- Reducing the achievement gap for all student sub-populations.
- Increasing student attendance rates and decrease student suspension rates.
- Recognizing and affirm the positive work Dayton teachers do to foster enhanced academic and social growth in the students they serve.

These outcomes are measurable and for the first time we will be able to report on deliverables from the high-quality schools sub-committee for the City of Learners.

We still have our challenges. The members of the Board of Education are having to make tough decisions quickly to get our schools on track. I want to commend them for their openness in receiving public input about these decisions. The task force co-chaired by board member Mohamed Al-Hamdani and Commissioner Jeff Mims will get input from potential business partners about how our facilities should be used most effectively to maximize educational opportunities. The public forums will be starting in March. The superintendent has already begun meeting with parents of the nine schools that have enrollment below 50% capacity.

I am so excited to continue this important work of partnership with Dayton's School Board, with the citizens of Dayton and with educational leaders in providing a culture of high quality education that this city needs and deserves.

My fellow Daytonians, I love this city. I love serving as your mayor. I love the progress we have made. And, I look forward to the tough work we have before us. After all, what is Dayton if not a labor of love?