

To the City of Bryant,

It is my duty and privilege to present to you, esteemed members of the City Council, and my fellow residents, the 2020 State of the City Address.

I thank the Council for inviting me to address our fine city after a spectacular year of progress. I thank those in attendance for joining me tonight as we reflect on how far we have come, and how much further we can go, together as a city. I must start by proudly declaring that the State of the City of Bryant is strong, and getting stronger each day.

This past year the Bryant School District proved yet again its academic prowess and our students performed and excelled in everything from academics, sports tournaments and championships, to unique recreational endeavors such as robotics and archery. With a new Junior High School, 2019 was a year of many great firsts for countless students and teachers. The District completed the construction of a new fine arts building, state of the art cafeteria, and a new physical education facility on the High School campus. The construction of the physical education facility has allowed the school district to host the state basketball tournament in March of 2020. Our schools, our kids are our future, and Bryant's future looks brighter than ever placed in the hands of our capable teachers.

Our City enjoys a variety of commerce and trade, and that is possible thanks to the efforts of local business owners, fresh investment and development opportunities, and the Greater Bryant Chamber of Commerce, and of course, consumers as a whole. Our partnership with the private sector is truly the backbone of our local economy. This past year, the sales tax revenue increased by 5% because many of you chose to shop local, start up your businesses here, and many businesses expanded the services and goods they offered.

The City of Bryant is blessed to have the finest employed in every department. From the roads we drive on, to the schools and churches we attend, to the shops and parks we frequent, city employees are working behind the scenes to ensure your safety and lifestyles are secured. Under the skillful guidance of our Department Heads, our city employees are finding solutions to problems we face every day.

Our economy is growing, just as our city is growing, and if we are to build on that energy, we have to adapt to our circumstances, come what may. Cities in Arkansas, and around the Union are struggling to attract the talent necessary to keep their cities running, to address new, never-before-seen problems, and to help ease them into the future. As a result cities are losing home-grown talent and skill, and failing to attract outside long-term employees. The fundamental problem is the pay. City employees around our country are feeling less secure in their positions, wages are falling behind, and cities are suffering as a result. In 2020, it is imperative the City of Bryant remain competitive in retaining and attracting field experts. The 5% increase in sales tax revenue is proof that we can craft the means necessary for securing the best fit for each job. I

am committed to working towards an incremental pay raise system that keeps us competitive, and respects the work ethic of our invaluable city employees' and their families. It's time to keep the talent here and make the City of Bryant an example for others. A job with the city should be your first option, not a last resort.

Our city spaces and parks have been host to a myriad of events, many of which we hope to continue in 2020. With the help of the chamber of Commerce, and business owners city-wide, we were able to collaborate on several city events, such as Pops in the Park, Fall Fest, Taste of Bryant, the AIR Race Classic, and more. Some events are expanding dramatically due to popular demand, such as the June Chamber and City Air Show at the Saline County Regional Airport. These events give us a chance to meet each other, to enjoy in new, exciting experiences, and foster a sense of camaraderie and joy.

You all have very likely seen the city change in many ways right before your eyes this past year. In 2019, 134 new residential construction permits, 16 commercial licenses, and 25 new business licenses were issued. The Encore Heart Hospital will be completed this year, and will add new jobs to our economy as well as spur medical-related growth in the area, while servicing countless patients. Roadways have been constructed and improved. Stormwater is being aggressively managed. Houses and other living opportunities are slowly cropping up. We are getting the work done together, and 2020 is challenging us to do it even better.

We cannot know what the year holds, but we can have a mighty hand in crafting our own success and security as a city. It is my fervent hope, that a year from now I will be standing in front you with infinitely greater success, and larger, more connected city-family.

It truly is my privilege to serve you all as mayor, and I promise to boldly lead us into 2020. I want to thank my beautiful wife and family for their support, love, advice, and patience through the easy days, and through the tough times. They have never begrudged me my duties as Mayor, and choose instead to encourage me daily. I could not do this without you. For everything, I thank you, and I love you.

To conclude, I want to thank the residents of Bryant for choosing to actively shape and work with their government, for supporting each other, and for choosing to be a part of this great city. 2019 was a year we can always be proud of, and it is time to focus in on the challenges 2020 and beyond will bring.

The State of the City of Bryant will always remain strong so long as we persevere towards a more perfect city each day.

Allen Scott

Mayor