



2019 / 2020 State of the City

As your Mayor delivering my first State of the City address, I have been humbled this past year as I've observed the sheer tenacity, integrity and inventiveness of our citizens, our young people, our business owners and entrepreneurs and the dedication of our public servants. I can confidently say that the City of Craig, based on the resolve of its citizens, has yet to see its finest days.

Your City Council is focused on engaging and participating with its Citizens in order to develop future plans that will help to define our future and meet the needs of our community. Various communication enhancements were implemented in 2019 to help ensure a more informed citizenry and transparent local government to include:

- Council Chambers audio/visual improvements allowing live broadcasting of council meetings to the community.
- More active use of digital marketing and updates through social media platforms and website.
- Launching of the new City website to enhance the user experience and ensure City engagements and activities are regularly updated.

A good portion of 2019 and now starting into 2020 has and will continue to be dedicated to the ongoing development of a comprehensive approach to meeting our fiscal goals and achieving our Economic Development priorities. We've heard the Citizens of Craig and by capitalizing on the strength of our citizens and leveraging the beautiful assets and attributes of our city and surrounding, this becomes part of a comprehensive economic strategy. In-part and because of these attributes in our community, we can count on strengthening our economy in the face of recent announcements and expected changes concerning our local primary employers.

Craig's future also means retooling. Started in 2019 and by the end of 2020, the City of Craig will have an excellent fiber optic broadband system that will meet the needs of location neutral workers wanting to relocate to Craig and engage in developing products in the area of cyber security, programming, internet marketing and analytics, data storage and potentially blockchain application development, to name a few. This effort and design started with the City of Craig and 43 local anchor institutions working to develop the initial plan that has since been implemented and enhanced by YVEA. Our continued commitment to the infrastructure, aesthetics and amenities of our city will attract these businesses and remote workers to Craig.

We also started the planning process in early 2019 to launch a Cowork/Innovation space in Craig with the help of some acquired grant funding. The goal is to create a collaborative and catalytic environment for existing businesses and future entrepreneurs. This project will require a few years to see the full fruits and benefits of its development.

Council Focus & Community Goals

The City has a number of goals and priorities and success begins by building and maintaining a stable, productive city workforce and organization that serves the citizens of Craig. A workforce that

contributes to the discovery process as your City Council looks for opportunities to enhance our community aesthetics and develop future infrastructure in order to promote investment in the City of Craig.

Eliminating the blight within our community has attentively progressed as a direct result of a new mitigation fund set-up by City Council in 2019. This fund has provided the necessary catalyst to exceed our 2019 objectives while expending only one-third of the dollars made available.

Managing revenues and expenses according to the 2019 and now 2020 approved fiscal budgets, will ensure our financial future and provide us a better opportunity to preserve our precious way of life. Some of the policies implemented, savings and investments made in 2019 for the benefit our community include:

- 2019 - Changing the election date to coincide with County elections and streamline election preparations and overall cost.
- 2019 - We heard the voters of Craig and asked them what their pleasure was regarding the Retail Marijuana question:

Citizens and council members are concerned about future revenues that will help fund initiatives in the City of Craig. The City Council understood the voters felt this was also important and believed that revenues generated from the sale of marijuana products could go to support our amenities, education and possibly valuable aspects of our social support network.

- 2019 - Saving the Museum of Northwest Colorado

The City Council led the way to ensure that this institution remains open in Craig. The Council approved \$300,000 for the continued operations of the museum in 2020. We are working closely with the Museum employees to find solutions for stable funding beyond 2020 and we will work to promote this institution to further attract visitors to Craig.

- 2019 - Shared Use Path Development from County Road 7 to Riford Avenue.

This federal grant for \$930,000 awarded to the City of Craig, has funded the majority of this CDOT managed process for the construction of a safer pathway for pedestrian/bike travel for Citizens living along the western edges of our community. This initial portion of the path is expected to be completed by May of this year.

Sales Tax Increase (2017-2019)

Per the goals established and presented to the voters of Craig and the City Staff in 2017, \$2.1 million of additional dollars generated as a result of the sales tax increase was intended to go towards Operations & Maintenance, Capital Outlay, Equipment replacements and Community Improvement projects. In 2019 we applied funding towards completing projects at some of the following locations to enhance recreational opportunities and improve drainage for parts of the city.

- Breeze park trails, shelters and irrigation Improvements and City Park Trails improvements
- Sidewalk and future landscaping enhancements to eastbound US highway 40 transitioning to 4th street.
- Landscape/hardscape improvements to the Northeast corner and frontage along the North side of W. Victory Way in front of Murdochs Ranch & Home Supply.
- Woodbury drainage project

Business Improvement, Retention & Expansion became an incredible aspect of our new Economic Development Committee. The committee undertakes and manages several programs intended to stimulate economic activity and attract new business, industry and entrepreneurs.

There are a number of activities endorsed by your City Council, but one of the most successful in 2019 has been the Small Business Grant program. We participated in dollar for dollar matched grants that aided in new business start-ups and capital acquisition, which directly and indirectly supported the employment of 7-8 new employees in our community. We also participated in enhancing the facades of 9 other businesses throughout the City of Craig.

In 2020 our budget has set several goals for the City that have been interrupted by one of the most unprecedented events within our country that we have seen in the past 100 Years. We intend to complete as many of these stated and budgeted goals as possible, but our focus through this crisis will be to realign our priorities to further support our citizens, businesses and the infrastructure of the City.

We are currently gathering data from our local businesses, non-profits and citizens to see what resources can be allocated to assist these entities through the difficult and unpredictable consequences related to COVID 19. In just a short time the impacts being recorded to our local economy are substantial even with the massive infusion of dollars expected from the most recent federal stimulus programs.

Our local businesses are a vital part of our way of life and helping to secure their future will further secure the future of our City. Much of the economic wellbeing of our City, its infrastructure and quality of life will depend on the survival of our small business community.

To the degree possible, I ask that every resident of Craig come together during this crisis to assist in the effort to save our businesses and provide for each other as the need arises. We face an invisible enemy that must be defeated and as we support each other, let's allow our humanity shine in the face of this pandemic.

The citizens of Craig are resilient, tough and independent. We care about each other and will do whatever is necessary to support each other and our families throughout this crisis.

As the Mayor of Craig, we intend to support your efforts and our community.

God Bless Us All,

Mayor Jarrod Ogden