



WILLIAMSON COUNTY

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**STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS
WILLIAMSON COUNTY/FRANKLIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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THE 2011-12 BUDGET PROCESS WAS LIKE BEING AN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER, VIEWING THE PROCESS FROM 30,000 FEET AND AT THE SAME TIME, BEING FIRMLY PLANTED ON THE GROUND. THERE ARE DIFFERENT VIEWS AND DYNAMICS.

WHILE ON THE GROUND, MUCH OF THE ATTENTION IS ON THE PROCESS, THE PLAYERS AND THE CORE NUMBERS. AT THE HIGHER ALTITUDE, YOU WILL SEE A DIFFERENT PICTURE. THE FULL LANDSCAPE IS OPEN, THE SHORT AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS, BOTH GOOD AND BAD COMMENTS AND RESULTS, AND SEEING THE WHOLE PICTURE, OR THE VISION FOR OUR COUNTY - "TO BE THE BEST COUNTY IN THE STATE OF TENNESSEE", REQUIRES STANDING BACK AND OBSERVING.

HOWEVER, IF YOU WANT TO AFFECT WHAT IS HAPPENING, YOU HAVE TO RETURN TO GROUND LEVEL. THE GOAL IS TO COME AS CLOSE AS YOU CAN TO BEING IN BOTH PLACES SIMULTANEOUSLY - ONE EYE VIEWING FROM THE GROUND AND ONE EYE VIEWING DOWN, WATCHING ALL THE ACTION, INCLUDING YOUR OWN. MOVING FROM PARTICIPANT TO OBSERVER, AND BACK AGAIN, IS A SKILL.

SERVING WITH ME THIS YEAR ON THE BUDGET COMMITTEE WERE CHAIRMAN, LEW GREEN, GREG DAVIS, ARLENE COOKE AND BRANDON RYAN.

EACH OF US PARTICIPATED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS IN SUCH A MANNER, ARMED WITH VARIOUS DATA AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND REVIEWING DIFFERENT SCENARIOS. WORKING WITH INFORMATION PROVIDED FROM FINANCE DIRECTOR, DAVID COLEMAN DURING MULTIPLE MEETINGS FOR ALMOST 9 MONTHS, THE FINAL BUDGET OF \$388,039,541 WAS APPROVED TWO WEEKS AGO, BY 2/3 OF THE COUNTY COMMISSION. IT INCLUDED A 23 CENT PROPERTY CHANGE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR COUNTY'S SCHOOLS AND ALL OTHER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTY, INCLUDING PUBLIC SAFETY, JUDICIAL, HIGHWAYS, SOLID WASTE AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT.

IN REVIEWING CURRENT INFORMATION, AS SOME COUNTIES HAVE NOT YET SET THEIR 2011-12 TAX RATES, YOU CAN SEE THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY RANKS 6TH LOWEST OF 18 MIDDLE-TENNESSEE COUNTIES ON CURRENT PROPERTY TAX RATES.

PRESERVING OUR MOODY'S BOND RATING IS ALWAYS GIVEN THE UTMOST CONSIDERATION AND I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT OUR "TRIPLE A" (Aaa) BOND RATING WILL BE MAINTAINED.

AT THIS TIME, LET'S REVIEW SOME CHARTS ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE
2011-12 BUDGET INFORMATION:

- * SCHOOLS, INCLUDING THE CAFETERIA AND EXTENDED SCHOOLS PROGRAM.....TOTAL \$ 248,809,276 (64.12% of the total budget);
- * ALL OTHERS.....TOTAL \$ 139,221,265 (35.88%, including debt associated with schools);

REVIEW OF BUDGET CHARTS:

- 1) Property Tax Rate Replacement w/Facilities Tax Chart;
- 2) Property Tax Revenue Distribution by Fund (FSSD receives 6%);
- 3) Major Revenue Sources: Local Share = 69.2%; State Share = 29.5%; and Federal Share = 1.3%

THIS CHART HELPS DEMONSTRATE THE NEED FOR US ALL TO **“DO BUSINESS WITH WILLIAMSON COUNTY BUSINESSES”**, WHERE OUR TAX DOLLARS ARE RETURNED TO OUR LOCAL BUDGET.

- 4) 2011-12 Expenditure Distributions by Fund (Note Rural DS & General DS = 14% of total);
- 5) 1987-2011 History of the Schools & County Budget Chart;

AS THESE CHARTS HAVE PARTIALLY DEMONSTRATED, THERE IS A “BIG PICTURE” TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN PULLING THE FINAL BUDGET TOGETHER FOR CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL.

LET’S REVIEW SOME OTHER THINGS THAT HAVE OCCURRED THROUGHOUT THE PAST YEAR.

THE 2010 CENSUS DEMONSTRATES THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY WAS, ONCE AGAIN, THE FASTEST GROWING COUNTY IN THE STATE DURING THE PAST 10 YEARS. WITH A POPULATION IN EXCESS OF 183,000, REFLECTING AN INCREASE OF OVER 44%, IT IS NO SURPRISE TO SEE WHY SO MANY FAMILIES HAVE MADE WILLIAMSON COUNTY THEIR HOME ADDRESS.

WITHIN A COUPLE OF WEEKS, WILLIAMSON COUNTY SCHOOLS WILL CUT THE RIBBONS ON THE 4TH AND 5TH SCHOOLS TO OPEN WITHIN IN THE PAST YEAR. WITH A STUDENT POPULATION THIS FALL ESTIMATED AT 32,048, CHALLENGES STILL REMAIN AHEAD FOR OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM AND OUR BUDGETING PROCESS.

OUR WORKFORCE CONTINUES TO PERFORM UPWARDLY AND POSITIVELY. THE LATEST RELEASED NUMBERS INDICATE THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY IS DOING WELL IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNTIES, WITH MAY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 6.6%. WITH NEW JOBS GROWTH IN EXCESS OF 2,000 IN THE PAST YEAR, YOU CAN SEE THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF BUSINESSES THAT HAVE EXPANDED AND/OR RELOCATED AND ARE NOW CALLING WILLIAMSON COUNTY THEIR HOME.

IN THE NOT SO DISTANT FUTURE, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER WILL BEGIN CONSTRUCTION ON 22 ACRES THEY PURCHASED AT THE CORNER OF MCEWEN AND CAROTHERS, ADDING TO THEIR CURRENT FACILITIES ALREADY LOCATED HERE.

VANDERBILT'S GROWING PARTNERSHIP WITH WILLIAMSON MEDICAL CENTER DEMONSTRATES THE STRENGTH OF OUR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL AND THE IMPACT OF THE NUMEROUS HEALTHCARE CORPORATIONS WHICH CURRENTLY EXISTS THROUGHOUT WILLIAMSON COUNTY.

ACCORDING TO OUR HUMAN RESOURCE RECORDS, OTHER THAN NEW PERSONNEL ADDED FOR SCHOOL GROWTH, INCLUDING POSITIONS NEEDED FOR PUBLIC SAFETY AND STUDENT SERVICES, THERE HAVE BEEN NO NEW POSITIONS ADDED FOR THE 13 ELECTED/APPOINTED OFFICIALS DURING THE PAST THREE (3) YEARS.

THOUGH THE WEATHER OUT TODAY DOES NOT QUITE CALL FOR SNOW AND ICE, WHEN THE TIME COMES, OUR HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT, EDDIE HOOD HAS THE SALT STOCKED AND THE TRUCKS READY TO ROLL, AS HE AND HIS STAFF DO A GREAT JOB IN KEEPING OUR COUNTY ROADS SAFE.

WITH THAT, I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE A BIG "HATS OFF" AND EXTEND A SINCERE "THANK YOU" TO OUR VARIOUS ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS, OUR DEPARTMENT HEADS AND EACH OF OUR RELATED STAFF MEMBERS FOR CARRYING THE EXTRA LOAD DURING SOME DIFFICULT TIMES AND THE INCREASED DEMANDS FOR SERVICES, AS NEEDED TO MEET THE NEEDS FOR OUR RESIDENTS.

THOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN NO NEW POSITIONS, THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL NEW CHANGES MADE IN PERSONNEL. NANCY ZION IS NOW THE COUNTY'S SOLID WASTE DIRECTOR, REPLACING LEWIS BUMPUS, WHO RETIRED. NANCY, A CERTIFIED LANDFILL MANAGER AND SOLID WASTE SYSTEMS MANAGER, IS WELL QUALIFIED, WITH OVER 14 YEARS EXPERIENCE WORKING FOR WILLIAMSON COUNTY.

A LENGTHY SEARCH AND INTERVIEW PROCESS RESULTED IN DOUG BRIGHTWELL TAKING CHARGE OF THE COUNTY'S ANIMAL CONTROL AND ADOPTION CENTER. EQUIPPED WITH A NEW SET OF POLICES, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES PUT TOGETHER BY THE ANIMAL CONTROL TASK FORCE OVER AN 18 MONTH PERIOD, DOUG IS UTILIZING HIS EXPERTISE FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ENSURE THE DEPARTMENT IS PREPARED TO PROVIDE QUALITY SERVICES FOR OUR FOUR-LEGGED FRIENDS.

ADDITIONALLY, THE COUNTY HAS CREATED A NEW OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY. UTILIZING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE AS A GUIDE TO REORGANIZE PUBLIC SAFETY EFFORTS IN OUR COUNTY. BILL JORGENSEN IS PLAYING A DUAL ROLE AND NOW DIRECTS THE NEW OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY, AS HE CONTINUES TO SERVE AS THE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR FOR THE E911 CENTER.

AS A RESIDENT, MAC PURDY IS NO STRANGER TO WILLIAMSON COUNTY OR TO THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROCESS. MAC HAS BEEN APPOINTED AS THE COUNTY'S EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR. HE HAS OVER 13 YEARS EXPERIENCE AT THE STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY. MAC WILL UTILIZE HIS TALENT AND EXPERTISE TO CONTINUE TO BUILD AND EXPAND RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONSE SYSTEM AND THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

FINALLY, UNDER THE DIRECTOR OF DOUG HOOD, PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR, THE BENDING CHESTNUT PARK TASK FORCE HAS COMPLETED THEIR RECOMMENDATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 340+ ACRE PARK IN THE WESTERN AREA OF THE COUNTY. THE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THIS REGIONAL PARK INCLUDE: HIKING TRAILS, A FISHING LAKE (FOR NON-MOTORIZED BOATS), PICNIC PAVILIONS, OUTDOOR AMPITHEATER, AND MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS TO NAME A FEW.

THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES, INCLUDING THE IDENTIFIED WATERFALLS AND NATURAL SPRINGS LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE PROPERTY, AS WELL AS RESERVING SPACE ON THE PROPERTY FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND NEEDS.

THE BENDING CHESTNUT PARK WILL BE YEARS IN DEVELOPING AND WE ARE CURRENTLY ESTABLISHING A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION SEEKING DONATIONS FROM GRANTS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR TO ASSIST IN THESE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS.

LIKEWISE, THE TASKFORCE CHARGED WITH IDENTIFYING THE USE OF THE FORMER BGA CAMPUS, LOCATED ON COLUMBIA AVENUE, HAS UNANIMOUSLY AGREED UPON A CONCEPTUAL DESIGN PLAN FOR THIS PROPERTY. IT IS EXCITING TO SEE PLANS BEGIN TO TAKE SHAPE FOR THE CAMPUS THAT WILL HOUSE A NEW SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER, A COMMUNITY THEATER AND A BGA REMEMBRANCE HALL, AS WELL AS A SMALL TOURIST WELCOMING AREA.

WE WILL ALSO BE ESTABLISHING A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION TO ASSIST IN SEEKING DONATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS CAMPUS.

BOTH OF THESE PROJECTS ARE SO EXCITING FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY!

THE UPDATED ZONING ORDINANCE IS ENTERING ITS FINAL STAGES OF REVIEW. THE REVISED SET OF REGULATIONS, DESIGNED TO IMPLEMENT THE RECENTLY ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN, IS THE CULMINATION OF TWO YEARS OF REVIEW AND INPUT FROM VARIOUS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS, AS WELL AS THE PUBLIC AT LARGE. COINCIDENTALLY, A PUBLIC INPUT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR TONIGHT (7/26) AT THE WILLIAMSON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY, HERE IN FRANKLIN, AT 6 PM.

BASED ON THE INPUT RECEIVED FROM THIS MEETING, AND MEETINGS TO BE SCHEDULED IN THE GRASSLAND, BURWOOD AND ARNO ROAD AREAS, THE REVISED ZONING ORDINANCE WILL BE FINALIZED PRIOR TO ITS REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE COUNTY'S PLANNING COMMISSION AND BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

THE AWARD WINNING TMA GROUP DEMONSTRATES ANOTHER SUCCESS STORY FOR OUR COUNTY. ON BEHALF OF WILLIAMSON COUNTY, AND THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY, THE TMA OPERATES AND MANAGES A REGIONAL COMMUTER VANPOOL FLEET THROUGHOUT 10 MIDDLE TENNESSEE COUNTIES. BEGUN IN 1993 WITH 10 VANS, THE FLEET NOW CONSISTS OF 81 VEHICLES, DAILY SHIFTING 1700 CARS OFF OUR MAIN CORRIDORS, HIGHWAYS AND ROADS.

THE KEY ASPECTS THAT MAKE THE COMMUTER VANPOOL PROGRAM A SUCCESS ARE RELIABILITY, CONVENIENCE AND AFFORDABILITY. THE PROGRAM PROVIDES MANY BENEFITS TO THE COMMUTER, INCLUDING:

- 1) REDUCTION OF PARKING AND FUEL COSTS;
- 2) PERSONAL VEHICLE MILEAGE AND MAINTENANCE SAVINGS AND MY PERSONAL FAVORITE....
- 3) STRESS REDUCTION!

ACCORDING TO AAA, THE AVERAGE VANPOOL COMMUTER SAVES \$4,000 A YEAR IN COMMUTE COSTS.

THERE IS SO MUCH MORE TO HIGHLIGHT, BUT TIME RESTRAINTS REQUIRE THAT I WRAP UP. IN CLOSING, I'D LIKE TO PERSONALLY INVITE YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO THE 2011 WILLIAMSON COUNTY FAIR, AUGUST 5TH THRU 13TH.

THIS YEAR'S FAIR, "A COUNTY FAIR WITH A WESTERN FLAIR!", INCLUDES MANY NEW WHOLESOME, CLEAN AND SAFE EXPERIENCES THAT WILL CREATE MEMORIES FOR YEARS TO COME! I HOPE YOU WILL ALL VISIT WITH "BUTTERCUP" BEFORE YOU LEAVE TODAY AND BRING YOUR LITTLE ONES TO SEE HER AT THE FAIRGROUNDS!

IN CONCLUSION, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT, JUST AS IN THE PAST, WE WILL CONTINUE TO FACE NEW CHALLENGES THROUGHOUT THE NEXT DECADE. HOWEVER, IT IS MY STRONG BELIEF THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY IS READY TO TACKLE THE HURDLES THAT LIE AHEAD AND WE ARE POISED TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES WE WILL FACE. AS MORE BUSINESSES AND FAMILIES MOVE TO OUR COUNTY - AND THEY WILL - WE WILL EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT WILL COME ALONG WITH THEM.

AS WE CONTINUE TO STRUGGLE WITH BUDGETS, CLASS ROOMS, GROWTH IN TRAFFIC, INCREASED NEEDS IN PUBLIC SAFETY, LAW ENFORCEMENT AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES, WE, LIKEWISE, WILL CLEAR THESE HURDLES THAT ARE BEFORE US.

HAVING BEEN A PUBLIC SERVANT FOR 25 YEARS, I'M EVEN MORE CONVINCED THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY CONTINUES TO BE THE BEST PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, PLAY AND WORSHIP. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONFIDENCE IN ME AND YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT. MAY GOD BLESS YOU, OUR COUNTY AND THE FREEDOMS WE ENJOY.