

ANNUAL STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS
Williamson, Inc. Chamber Luncheon
July 24, 2019

WELCOME AND THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE TODAY AS WE SHARE THE ANNUAL STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS.

I WANT TO RECOGNIZE EACH OF THE ELECTED OFFICIALS WHO HAVE JOINED US TODAY FROM THE STATE, COUNTY AND CITIES AND TO THANK THEM FOR TAKING TIME TO BE HERE. I ALSO WANT TO SEND A SPECIAL WELCOME TO THE NEW DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS, JASON GOLDEN. THOUGH HE IS NOT NEW TO MANY OF US OR TO THE SCHOOL OPERATIONS, HE WAS RECENTLY APPOINTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD TO SERVE AS THE NEW SUPERINTENDENT AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HIM IN HIS NEW CAPACITY.

SPECIAL THANKS IS EXTENDED TO WILLIAMSON MEDICAL CENTER FOR SPONSORING TODAY'S MEETING. AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, THEY RECENTLY LAUNCHED A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BONE & JOINT INSTITUTE OF TENNESSEE AND CONSTRUCTED A NEW STATE OF THE ART FACILITY ON THE HOSPITAL CAMPUS. AS A REGIONAL LEADER IN ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY, WILLIAMSON MEDICAL IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH THIS MOST RESPECTED, TALENTED AND DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE.

WE ARE VERY FORTUNATE TO LIVE IN A GREAT COUNTY – A COUNTY THAT IS WELL KNOWN AND NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FOR OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY, OUR SERVICES, OUR VALUES AND FOR OUR MANY QUALITIES OF LIFE THAT WE ENJOY AND MAY EVEN TAKE FOR GRANTED.

LAST YEAR, 8.79% OF THE 140,000+ REGISTERED VOTERS AT THAT TIME, MADE IT A PRIORITY TO UTILIZE A FEW MINUTES OF THEIR TIME TO CAST THEIR VOTE IN A LOCAL REFERENDUM. THIS REFERENDUM ELECTION ASKED PERMISSION TO RAISE THE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX BY .5% TO PRODUCE ADDITIONAL LOCAL REVENUES TO HELP OFFSET THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION (NOT OPERATIONAL FUNDING) OF NEW SCHOOLS IN OUR COUNTY.

WHEN IT COMES TO NATIONAL ELECTIONS, OUR COUNTY CONSISTENTLY HAS AMONG THE HIGHEST TURNOUT OF REGISTERED VOTERS. LIKEWISE, IT IS REWARDING TO KNOW THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY VOTERS ARE SOME OF THE MOST ENGAGED IN THE STATE. HOWEVER, PARTICIPATION IN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS REMAINS LOW. THIS PAST MAY'S BRENTWOOD MUNICIPAL ELECTION, TURNOUT WAS 12.8% OF REGISTERED VOTERS. IN THE 2017, FRANKLIN MUNICIPAL ELECTION, TURNOUT WAS 9.2% OF REGISTERED VOTERS. THERE WILL BE ANOTHER FRANKLIN MUNICIPAL ELECTION THIS FALL AND I WOULD ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE TO DO SO.

SPEAKING OF BEING INVOLVED, I WANT TO ENCOURAGE ALL WILLIAMSON COUNTY RESIDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF UPDATING THE COUNTY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, WHICH WILL GUIDE THE FUTURE GROWTH AND PRESERVATION OF UNINCORPORATED WILLIAMSON COUNTY.

THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF AND A CONSULTANT TEAM HAVE BEEN GATHERING A GREAT DEAL OF INPUT FROM CITIZENS ABOUT HOW THEY VIEW THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTY AND THERE WILL BE MANY MORE PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES AS THE PROCESS UNFOLDS. NOW IS THE TIME FOR YOUR VOICE TO BE HEARD. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE PLAN WILL BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF THE YEAR, AT WHICH TIME IT WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

LIKEWISE, I HOPE THAT EACH WILLIAMSON COUNTY RESIDENT WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE 2020 CENSUS. A COMPLETE AND ACCURATE CENSUS IS THE ONLY WAY WILLIAMSON COUNTY CAN RECEIVE FINANCIAL REWARDS FROM FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS WHEN THEY ARE CALCULATED AND DISTRIBUTED BASED ON POPULATION. GETTING AN ACCURATE HEADCOUNT OF OUR RESIDENTS WILL ALSO ENSURE THAT WE HAVE EQUAL REPRESENTATION AT THE FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS. EVERYONE COUNTS AND IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE COUNTED IN THE 2020 CENSUS!

SINCE THE SALES TAX INCREASE PASSED IN FEBRUARY 2018, WILLIAMSON COUNTY SCHOOLS HAVE OPENED A NEW THOMPSON'S STATION ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL, JORDAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. CREEKSIDE ELEMENTARY WILL OPEN IN JANUARY 2020. THE COST OF FINANCING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THESE NEW SCHOOLS HAS BEEN PARTIALLY OFFSET BY THIS NEW REVENUE.

ADDITIONS AND RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS HAVE BEEN FUNDED FOR BOTH PAGE MIDDLE AND PAGE HIGH SCHOOL AS WELL AS THE REMODELING OF THE FACILITY NEXT TO FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL THAT WILL NOW SERVE AS AN ENTREPRENEURIAL AND INNOVATION CENTER, WHICH WILL INCLUDE VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL CLASSROOMS THAT PROVIDE SKILLED WORKERS IN ADDRESSING EMPLOYMENT NEEDS.

AS OF JUNE 30, 2019, NEW SALES TAX COLLECTIONS HAVE BROUGHT IN ALMOST \$24 MILLION. APPROXIMATELY \$17 MILLION OF THIS AMOUNT HAS ALREADY BEEN ALLOCATED TOWARDS SCHOOL BORROWING COSTS AND \$7 MILLION IS IN RESERVE TO PROVIDE NEEDED CAPACITY FOR FUTURE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION. THE OPERATING COSTS BEGIN ONCE THE SCHOOLS ARE BUILT, DOORS OPEN AND CLASSES BEGIN.

A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAVE ASKED WHY DOESN'T THE COUNTY "CHARGE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE MOVING HERE TO PAY FOR THE GROWTH"? AS MANY OF YOU WILL RECALL, IN 1988, WILLIAMSON COUNTY ENACTED THREE COUNTY-WIDE PRIVATE ACTS IMPLEMENTING PRIVILEGE TAX FEES, ADEQUATE FACILITIES TAXES AND ADEQUATE SCHOOLS FACILITIES TAX, WHICH WERE ENACTED TO CHARGE A PARTICULAR RATE FOR HEATED AND COOLED SPACE ON NEW CONSTRUCTION.

IN 2017, AN EDUCATION IMPACT FEE WAS IMPLEMENTED ON NEW CONSTRUCTION. DUE TO THIS, PEOPLE MOVING INTO THE COUNTY PAY A FEE ON NEW HOMES BUT EXISTING RESIDENTS AREN'T CHARGED BY WAY OF INCREASED PROPERTY TAXES. THE FUNDS COLLECTED HELP TO OFFSET THE COST OF SERVICES MADE NECESSARY BY NEW GROWTH.

AS YOU MAY RECALL, THE EDUCATION IMPACT FEE WAS ASSESSED AT 50% IN MARCH, 2017 AND THE FULL AMOUNT BEGAN BEING ASSESSED IN SEPTEMBER, 2017. YOU MAY OR MAY NOT BE AWARE, THAT THERE WERE A NUMBER OF HOME BUILDERS WHO PAID THIS FEE UNDER PROTEST AND SUBSEQUENTLY LEVIED A LAWSUIT AGAINST THE COUNTY FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS NEW FEE. THE AMOUNT OF FEES PAID UNDER PROTEST TOTALED \$11,143,079.

THE LAWSUIT HAS BEEN HEARD AT THE LOCAL CIRCUIT COURT WHO RULED IN FAVOR OF THE COUNTY; HOWEVER, THIS RULING IS BEING APPEALED.

SINCE IMPLEMENTATION IN MARCH 2017 THROUGH JUNE 2019, WE HAVE COLLECTED A TOTAL OF \$38,099,835 IN EDUCATION IMPACT FEES. IN OCTOBER 2018, A TOTAL OF \$6,622,149.97 OF THE NON-PROTESTED FEES COLLECTED WERE USED TO OFFSET SCHOOL CAPITAL COSTS, AS FOLLOWS:

GRASSLAND AUDITORIUM - \$1,700,000

SUNSET AUDITORIUM - \$1,700,000

CREEKSIDE ELEMENTARY - \$3,168,669.30

EXPANSION OF INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL - \$53,480.67

WITHOUT THE USE OF THE FUNDS PAID UNDER PROTEST, THIS LEAVES A CURRENT BALANCE OF \$20,334,606.26 AVAILABLE TO OFFSET CAPITAL COSTS FOR FUTURE WILLIAMSON COUNTY SCHOOLS.

THE SCHOOL BOARD APPROVED AND REQUESTED A 2019-20 OPERATING BUDGET TOTALING APPROXIMATELY \$386.2 MILLION DOLLARS. BASED ON AVAILABLE REVENUE SOURCES, THEIR RECOMMENDED BUDGET REQUEST REQUIRED AN ELEVEN-CENT INCREASE IN THE PROPERTY TAX RATE FOR THE GENERAL PURPOSE SCHOOL FUND. AT THE RECENT JULY COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING, COMMISSIONERS RECEIVED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE AVAILABILITY OF ADDITIONAL STATE FUNDING. THE COUNTY COMMISSION THEN VOTED, 23-1, TO APPROVE A SEVEN-CENT PROPERTY TAX INCREASE TO FUND THE SCHOOL OPERATING BUDGET.

AT THIS TIME, I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE THANKS TO THE LATE CHARLES SARGENT WHO, WHEN FINISHING HIS LAST STATE REPRESENTATIVE TERM, WORKED TO ENSURE THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY RECEIVED THEIR FAIR SHARE OF GROWTH FUNDS FROM THE STATE OF TENNESSEE FOR OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM.

THE RECENTLY APPROVED SCHOOL BUDGET FOR THIS NEW FISCAL YEAR REFLECTS AN INCREASE OF APPROXIMATELY \$35 MILLION DOLLARS OVER THE PRIOR YEAR APPROVED BUDGET.

MANY OF YOU MAY HAVE BEEN IN ATTENDANCE AT THE CHAMBER LUNCHEON LAST YEAR WHEN, THEN SUPERINTENDENT, MIKE LOONEY, DISCUSSED THE NEED TO INCREASE THE STARTING PAY FOR TEACHERS.

AS APPROVED, THE 2019-20 BUDGET PROVIDES AN ADDITIONAL \$6 MILLION, ABOVE THE 3% SALARY INCREASES, TO HELP THE SCHOOL BOARD ADDRESS THIS NEED FOR OUR STARTING TEACHER POSITIONS.

THIS BUDGET INCLUDES A PROJECTED INCREASE STUDENT POPULATION OF 1,048 STUDENTS AND 152 NEW POSITIONS.

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR WILLIAMSON COUNTY RESIDENTS TO KNOW THAT WHEN STATE REVENUES ARE APPROPRIATED USING THE STATE BEP FORMULA FOR EDUCATION, WILLIAMSON COUNTY'S SCHOOL SYSTEM HAS 587 POSITIONS THAT ARE 100% FUNDED BY LOCAL REVENUES. BECAUSE THESE POSITIONS ARE NOT RECOGNIZED BY THE STATE IN THE BEP FORMULA.

THIS FUNDING ALONE REPRESENTS OVER \$40 MILLION DOLLARS. IF ONE PENNY ON THE COUNTY'S TAX RATE GENERATES A LITTLE OVER \$1 MILLION EACH, THE LACK OF FUNDING FROM THE STATE REPRESENTS 40 PENNIES ON THE SCHOOL AND TOTAL TAX RATE FOR WILLIAMSON COUNTY THIS YEAR.

OVERALL, THE 2019-20 BUDGET FOR WILLIAMSON COUNTY TOTALS \$626,021,220 MILLION, WITH FUNDING FOR SCHOOL OPERATIONS CONTINUES TO REPRESENT 65% AND ALL OTHER GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS REPRESENTS 35%. ADDING THE DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS FOR SCHOOLS INCREASES THE PERCENTAGE OF THE COUNTY'S TOTAL BUDGET DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTED TO SCHOOLS, THIS PERCENTAGE THEN INCREASES TO 73 PERCENT (73%). IN OTHER WORDS, 73 CENTS OF EVERY DOLLAR OF REVENUE OF THE COUNTY'S BUDGET IS SPENT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY.

THE OPERATION OF THE COUNTY'S COURT SYSTEMS, THE CLERK'S OFFICES, LAW ENFORCEMENT, ALL COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS, PUBLIC SAFETY, LANDFILL, LIBRARY, PARKS AND RECREATION, HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT, ANIMAL CARE SERVICES, AND GENERAL OPERATIONS ARE FUNDED WITH THE REMAINING 27 PERCENT (27%), OR 27 CENTS OF EVERY DOLLAR.

I WANT TO THANK THIS YEAR'S BUDGET COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY STEVE SMITH WHO SERVED ALONGSIDE MYSELF AND COMMISSIONERS BETH LOTHERS, JENNIFER MASON AND MATT WILLIAMS. THEY WERE PRESENTED WITH THE DIFFICULT TASK OF TAKING THE RECOMMENDED BUDGET, WHICH REQUIRED A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE, TO THE FULL COUNTY COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL. THIS WAS NOT A RESPONSIBILITY THEY TOOK LIGHTLY.

I ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE THE OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS, AS WELL AS EACH OF THEIR RESPECTIVE STAFFS, FOR WORKING WITHIN THE GUIDELINES PROVIDED BY THE BUDGET COMMITTEE.

PROPERTY ASSESSOR, BRAD COLEMAN, REPORTED DURING THE BUDGET PROCESS THAT THERE ARE CURRENTLY 92,387 REAL PROPERTY PARCELS. 4,362 OF THESE STILL SHOW UP ON THE MAP AS BEAUTIFUL, LUSH COUNTRY SIDE AND GREEN SPACE. WHILE THIS NUMBER ONLY REPRESENTS 5% OF THE PARCEL COUNT, GREEN SPACE STILL COVERS CLOSE TO 60% OF THE COUNTY'S ACREAGE.

SINCE WE WERE HERE IN JULY 2018, WILLIAMSON COUNTY HAS CONTINUED TO EXPERIENCE A NUMBER OF CHANGES:

OUR COUNTY'S EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT HAS MOST RECENTLY PARTNERED WITH THE CITY OF SPRING HILL TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY DISPATCH OPERATIONS FOR THEIR RESIDENTS.

THIS PARTNERSHIP ALLOWS US TO STREAMLINE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS FOR THESE CITIES IN THE COUNTY AND ELIMINATE RESOURCE DUPLICATION AND CUT DOWN ON DROPPED CALLS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES.

THE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT RECENTLY IMPLEMENTED A NEW "ASAP TO PSAP" SYSTEM WHICH MEANS THAT DISPATCHED CALLS TO A HOME OR BUSINESS WITH AN INSTALLED ALARM SYSTEM WILL NOW HAVE THAT EMERGENCY CALL ROUTED DIRECTLY TO THE 911 CENTER FOR RESPONSE. RE-DIRECTING THAT CALL FOR HELP TO 911 FIRST, INSTEAD OF GOING TO THE SECURITY COMPANY AND THEN BEING ROUTED TO DISPATCH, WILL REDUCE DISPATCH TIMES BY 4 MINUTES FOR EACH ALARM CALL.

AS A COUNTY GOVERNMENT, WILLIAMSON COUNTY DOES NOT PROVIDE A FIRE DEPARTMENT SERVICE. INSTEAD, THE COUNTY COMMISSION AND THE 911 BOARD PROVIDE FUNDING FOR TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR VOLUNTEER RESPONSE PERSONNEL. DURING THE PAST YEAR, VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER RECRUITMENT HAS INCREASED 17 PERCENT (17%). IN JUNE OF 2018, WE WERE PROUD TO HAVE 271 VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS SERVING THEIR NEIGHBORS. DUE TO SUCCESSFUL RECRUITMENT PRACTICES AND A COMMITTED CONCENTRATION TOWARD THE

VOLUNTEER SPIRIT, WE INCREASED OUR FIREFIGHTING FORCE TO 318 THIS YEAR, AND HAVE ON-GOING TRAINING FOR ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS MONTHLY. THROUGH THE COORDINATION EFFORTS OF THE COUNTY'S PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICE, VITAL TRAINING, EQUIPMENT, FACILITIES AND

MANPOWER ARE ALL UTILIZED TO PROVIDE FIRE PROTECTION THROUGHOUT OUR UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF THE COUNTY.

BY LOOKING AT THIS MAP, YOU WILL SEE THAT OUR VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS HAVE A LOT OF GROUND TO COVER AND WE APPRECIATE EACH OF THEM FOR THEIR SERVICE AND COMMITMENT. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ENSURE THAT PUBLIC SAFETY IS A PRIORITY IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY!

EMERGENCY SERVICE FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS ARE CURRENTLY PLANNED FOR THE BENDING CHESTNUT AND ARRINGTON COMMUNITIES. LAND HAS BEEN PURCHASED IN THE BURWOOD COMMUNITY AND SITES ARE BEING EXPLORED FOR LAND IN THE TRIUNE AREA AND WEST OF FRANKLIN.

THE RECYCLING INDUSTRY IS CHANGING NATION WIDE.

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1ST, WILLIAMSON COUNTY WILL BE GOING “BACK TO BASICS” IN THE RECYCLING PROGRAM AND WILL BE ACCEPTING PLASTICS # 1 AND # 2 ONLY IN THE MIXED PLASTIC RECYCLING BIN AT ALL COUNTY CONVENIENCE CENTERS AND RECYCLING DROP-OFFS.

PLASTICS # 1 AND # 2 INCLUDE MOSTLY BOTTLES AND JUGS. WITH THIS NEW INITIATIVE, WILLIAMSON COUNTY WILL HAVE A CLEANER PLASTIC RECYCLING STREAM WITH LESS ROOM FOR CONTAMINATION, WHICH CAN RUIN AN ENTIRE RECYCLING LOAD.

WHAT CAN EACH OF US DO TO HELP? LOOK FOR THE RECYCLING SYMBOL ON THE PLASTIC ITEM IN QUESTION. THERE SHOULD BE A RECYCLING SYMBOL.

IF IT IS A # 1 OR # 2, WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED WITH THE PRODUCT, RINSE THE PLASTIC AND RECYCLE IT.

IF IT IS A # 3 THROUGH # 7, THESE PLASTICS NO LONGER HAVE A RELIABLE MARKET, SO THEY NO LONGER GO IN OUR RECYCLING BINS.

COMMON PLASTICS OF THESE TYPES INCLUDE:

PLASTIC BAGS

FOAM

YOGURT TUBS

FLOWER POTS

INSTEAD, USE REUSABLE TOTES – STOP BY THE SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT BOOTH AS YOU LEAVE TODAY AND PICK UP A FREE REUSABLE TOTE!

USE A REUSABLE DRINKING MUG AND AVOID PLASTIC, SINGLE USE BOTTLES.

REMEMBER THE PHRASE “LESS IS MORE” AND, WHEN IN DOUBT, YOU SHOULD THROW IT OUT.

BY GOING BACK TO BASICS AND EMPLOYING THE “3 RS” – REDUCE...REUSE...RECYCLE

TOGETHER, WE CAN CREATE A CLEANER, GREENER, MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY WILLIAMSON COUNTY. IT IS UP TO EACH OF US TO DO OUR INDIVIDUAL PARTS TO HELP KEEP WILLIAMSON BEAUTIFUL.

IN 2018, WILLIAMSON COUNTY’S ANIMAL CARE CENTER HAD AN INTAKE OF 4,367 ANIMALS WITH A SAVE RATE OF 95%. THIS MEANS THAT 95% OF THE ANIMALS WHO WERE IN OUR SHELTER FOUND THEIR WAY TO LOVING HOMES.

AS REPORTED LAST YEAR, LAND HAS BEEN PURCHASED JUST NORTH OF HIGHWAY 96, WEST FOR A NEW ANIMAL CARE CENTER. BY WORKING WITH THE NEWLY CREATED PUBLIC BUILDING AUTHORITY, WE WILL BE ABLE TO BE ABLE TO REDUCE THE INITIAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS OF THE PROJECT.

A STEERING COMMITTEE, COMPRISED OF LOCAL INDIVIDUALS WITH A PASSION FOR OUR ANIMALS, IS PROVIDING INPUT ON THE PROJECT TO ENSURE OUR FURRY FRIENDS WILL HAVE THE “BEST OF THE BEST” WHEN WE OPEN OUR DOORS IN FALL OF NEXT YEAR.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BUILDING AUTHORITY HAVE BEEN MEETING WITH THE VARIOUS COUNTY DEPARTMENTS WHO WORK IN THE JAIL, JUVENILE AND JUSTICE SYSTEMS. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION THEY REVIEWED, LEAD THE MEMBERS OF THE PBA TO MAKE THE JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER AND RELATED OPERATIONS A PRIORITY.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY HAS ALWAYS VALUED THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN. WE SHOULD ALSO BE A LEADER IN PROTECTING THEM.

WE ARE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING SEVERE OVERCROWDING IN THE COURTROOMS, JUVENILE SERVICE AND THE JUVENILE CLERK’S OFFICE AREAS.

THE JUVENILE DETENTION FACILITY DOES NOT MEET CURRENT BEST PRACTICES FOR SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENTS FOR THOSE WHO MUST BE SECURELY DETAINED IN AN EFFORT TO PROTECT PUBLIC SAFETY.

ACCORDING TO GRESHAM-SMITH, WILLIAMSON COUNTY IS EXPECTED TO HAVE MORE THAN 382,000 RESIDENTS BY 2048; THAT IS A 66% INCREASE FROM 2018. AND, NOT SURPRISINGLY, OUR SCHOOL AGE YOUTH POPULATION IS PROJECTED TO GROW RIGHT ALONG WITH THAT NUMBER.

AS OUR POPULATION GROWS, THE DEMAND ON OUR JUVENILE SERVICES & FAMILY COURT CASELOAD IS FORECASTED TO RISE.

A NEW FACILITY WILL BE DESIGNED TO ALLOW FOR IMPROVED PRIVACY AND SAFETY, IMPROVED EDUCATION AND WOULD ALLOW FOR INCREASED SUPPORT SPACE FOR STAFF. THE COMMITMENT

AND LEADERSHIP EXHIBITED BY THE JUVENILE SERVICES AND JUVENILE COURT STAFFS IS TO BE COMMENDED AND WE SHOULD PRIORITIZE THE FACILITIES, TOOLS AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THEM, REALIZING THE LONG-TERM BENEFITS WE ALL STAND TO GAIN.

TOURISM CONTINUES TO BE ON THE RISE – IN RECENT WEEKS, ELLIE WESTMAN-CHIN PROUDLY ANNOUNCED THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY WELCOMED A RECORD NUMBER OF 1.72 MILLION VISITORS IN 2018. THIS REPRESENTS A 13.6% INCREASE IN OUR COUNTY’S TOURISM AND IS WELL ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE INCREASE OF ONLY 1.9%.

IN 2017, THE MONEY SPENT BY TOURISTS IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY SAVED RESIDENTS APPROXIMATELY \$516 IN LOCAL TAXES, PER HOUSEHOLD.

BASED ON A RECENT REPORT FROM MIC.COM, THE FUTURE OF TOURISM IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY IS ENCOURAGING, AS THEY HAVE NAMED FRANKLIN AMONG ITS “*BEST PLACES TO TRAVEL IN 2019.*”

SPEAKING OF VISITORS, WILLIAMSON COUNTY ARCHIVES WELCOMED 10,538 VISITORS AND RESEARCHERS IN 2018. IF YOU HAVE NOT TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT OUR COUNTY ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM, YOU ARE MISSING OUT ON A REMARKABLE COLLECTION OF WILLIAMSON COUNTY’S HISTORY. A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, THE ARCHIVES BEGAN PARTICIPATING IN THE MONTHLY ART CRAWL IN DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN AND WE HAVE SEEN AN INCREASE IN LOCALS VISITING THE FACILITY, ONCE THEY HAVE LEARNED MORE ABOUT WHAT IT HAS TO OFFER.

IT IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR EACH OF US, WHO MAY HAVE LIVED HERE A LONG TIME OR THOSE WHO ARE RECENT RESIDENTS, TO FORGET TO EXPLORE OUR OWN BACKYARDS. BY NOT DOING SO, WE ARE MISSING OUT ON A NUMBER OF EXCITING THINGS ARE THAT HAPPENING WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF OUR COUNTY.

I ENCOURAGE EACH OF YOU TO VISIT OUR ARCHIVES, VISIT DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN, VISIT THE TOURISM CENTER AND VISIT THE REMOTE COMMUNITIES AND COUNTRY STORES THROUGHOUT WILLIAMSON COUNTY. YOU WILL EXPERIENCE FIRST HAND ALL THAT WILLIAMSON COUNTY HAS TO OFFER FROM FAMILY-FRIENDLY PLACES AND EVENTS TO SCENIC ROADWAYS TO COMMUNITY SHOPPING. IF YOU TRULY EXPLORE WILLIAMSON COUNTY, YOU WILL FALL IN LOVE WITH IT ALL OVER AGAIN.

AS YOU EXPLORE, YOU WILL NOTICE THAT OUR PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO PROVIDE RECREATION AND LEISURE SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.

THE 2019 PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS INCLUDE:

*OVER 14,000 SQUARE FEET OF ADDITIONS AT THE INDOOR SPORTS COMPLEX IN BRENTWOOD, WHICH INCLUDES A NEW GROUP FITNESS STUDIO, GYMNASIUM AND PICKLEBALL COURTS.

*\$1.5 MILLION PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF BRENTWOOD FOR A NEW SPLASH PARK AT THE INDOOR SPORTS COMPLEX.

*COMPLETION OF PHASE 1 IMPROVEMENTS AT THE FAIRVIEW RECREATION COMPLEX, INCLUDING A WELLNESS CENTER, GROUP FITNESS STUDIO, INDOOR CYCLING STUDIO AND NEW LOCKER ROOMS AND SHOWER FACILITIES.

*PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS IN FAIRVIEW INCLUDE A NEW SENIORS LOUNGE, ENTRANCE AND LOBBY AREA.

*INITIAL STAGES OF A NEW RECREATION COMPLEX ARE UNDERWAY ON BETHESDA ROAD. CONSISTING OF 43 ACRES, THIS MUCH NEEDED FACILITY WILL INCLUDE A NEW RECREATION CENTER WITH GYMNASIUM, A NEW BRANCH LIBRARY AND MULTI-PURPOSE OUTDOOR SPORTS FIELDS.

*THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RECENTLY DONATED PEACOCK HILL NATURE PARK IN THE COLLEGE GROVE COMMUNITY. THIS WILL BE A PASSIVE PARK UTILIZING THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THIS LAND.

*COMPLETION OF PHASE 1 OF THE WILKINS BRANCH MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK. THIS PROJECT IS A COLLABORATION WITH OUTDOOR ENCOUNTERS TO PROVIDE A FREE-USE RECREATIONAL PARK TO INCLUDE MILES OF SINGLE TRAIL TRAILS, FROM BEGINNERS TO ADVANCED TRAILS, DOWNHILL TRAILS, ENDURANCE TRAILS, A PUMP PARK AND A SKILLS COURSE.

AS WE CONTINUE TALKING ABOUT SPORTS, YOU MAY REMEMBER THAT THE COUNTY COMMISSION AUTHORIZED THE INITIAL FORMATION OF A WILLIAMSON COUNTY SPORTS AUTHORITY IN 2016. IN THE PAST 18 MONTHS, THIS GROUP HAS MET WITH NUMEROUS SPORTS ENTITIES REVIEWING THEIR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS REGARDING AN AMATEUR SPORTS FACILITY FOR WILLIAMSON COUNTY.

THE FEASIBILITY STUDY CONDUCTED BY HUNDEN STRATEGIC PARTNERS HAS LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR SOME SERIOUS CONVERSATIONS AND THERE WILL BE MORE OF THIS STORY TO COME IN FUTURE MONTHS.

THE END OF LAST MONTH MITSUBISHI ANNOUNCED THEIR DECISION TO RELOCATE THEIR CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS, WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN SINCE 1988, TO FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE. THEIR MOVE REFLECTS AN INVESTMENT IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY OVER \$18 MILLION AND BRINGS APPROXIMATELY 200 NEW JOBS TO OUR COUNTY.

WE LOVE CORPORATE RELOCATIONS BUT NOT ANY MORE THAN WE LOVE OUR LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES. A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, (IN-X-OR) ENEXOR BIOENERGY, A RENEWABLE ENERGY COMPANY LOCATED IN FRANKLIN, ANNOUNCED THEY WILL EXPAND THEIR OPERATIONS AND MOVE

INTO A NEW 40,000 SQUARE FOOT MANUFACTURING FACILITY. ENEXOR WILL INVEST \$5 MILLION AND CREATE APPROXIMATELY 50 NEW JOBS OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

AS OUR POPULATION CONTINUES TO GROW, STUDIES HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT THE SECOND FASTEST GROWING POPULATION IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY IS 65 & OLDER. THEY ARE CHOOSING TO RETIRE AND MOVE HERE TO BE CLOSER TO THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

ON THE FLIP SIDE OF THAT, SOME TIMES THE CHILDREN MOVE HERE TO BE CLOSER TO THEIR FAMILIES AND GRAND PARENTS. I AM TAKING A MOMENT TO WELCOME MY OLDEST SON, RYAN, HIS WIFE LAURA AND THREE OF MY NINE GRANDCHILDREN THAT WILL MAKE THEIR NEW HOME HERE IN WILLIAMSON COUNTY.

I RECENTLY HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO VIEW THE EXTENSION OF THE MACK HATCHER PARKWAY THAT IS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION. THIS ROAD CONSISTS OF 3.2 MILES AND PROVIDES CONNECTIVITY FROM HILLSBORO ROAD, WEST TO HIGHWAY 96, WEST. THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN HIGHLY ANTICIPATED AND WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED UPON IT'S COMPLETION.

I WAS ABLE TO TAKE CREED HENDERSON, OUR WILLIAMSON COUNTY TELEVISION DIRECTOR, ALONG FOR THE RIDE AND HE WILL BE PLACING SOME OF THAT FOOTAGE ON OUR WCTV-GOVERNMENT TELEVISION CHANNEL.

LAST YEAR, THE FEDERAL BUILD GRANT WAS AWARDED TO THE CITY OF SPRING HILL FOR THE NEW BUCKNER ROAD INTERCHANGE AT I-65. WHEN COMPLETED, THIS ROAD WILL CONNECT WITH LEWISBURG PIKE, SOUTH OF THE BRIENZ VALLEY SUBDIVISION AND WILL INCLUDE NEW TURNING LANES AND AN INTERSECTION LIGHT.

ENVIRONMENTAL WORK FOR THE INTERCHANGE AND CONNECTOR ROADS HAS ALREADY BEGUN AND IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY JANUARY 2020. IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF SPRING HILL, THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, PLANS TO AWARD A DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACT IN SEPTEMBER 2020 WITH A COMPLETION DATE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 2025.

THE WILLIAMSON COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT RECENTLY SUBMITTED APPLICATION TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR A BUILD GRANT TO ASSIST WITH THE COST OF REPLACING THE BRIDGE ON SNEED ROAD. THE GRANT WOULD COVER 80% OF THE PROJECT COSTS THROUGH FEDERAL FUNDING. ON BEHALF OF THE HIGHWAY COMMISSION, I WANT TO THANK U. S. SENATORS LAMAR ALEXANDER AND MARSHA BLACKBURN, REPRESENTATIVES SAM WHITSON AND BRANDON OGLES AND STATE SENATOR, JACK JOHNSON FOR THEIR LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR THIS GRANT. WE HOPE THAT THESE FEDERAL FUNDS WILL BE APPROVED FOR THIS PROJECT.

THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT IS ALSO WORKING TOWARDS IMPROVEMENTS ON ARNO ROAD, INCLUDING TRAFFIC TURNING LANES AT PAGE MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS AS WELL AS IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INTERSECTION AT PEYTONSVILLE-TRINITY ROAD AND ARNO ROAD. THEY ARE ALSO WORKING TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS AT THE INTERSECTION OF BERRY'S CHAPEL ROAD AND FARMINGTON TO INSTALL A ROUND-ABOUT FOR BETTER TRAFFIC FLOW. THANK YOU TO SUPERINTENDENT, EDDIE HOOD AND HIS TEAM AT THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT. WE APPRECIATE THEIR HARD WORK AND EFFORTS IN WORKING FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR CITIZENS.

IN WRAPPING UP TODAY, I WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO SEEK OUT THOSE AREAS OF YOUR COMMUNITY THAT IS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO YOU AND ASK YOU TO GET INVOLVED.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, WORSHIP AND RAISE A FAMILY BECAUSE OF THOSE WHO ARE INVOLVED TO ENSURE THAT THOSE "BEHIND THE SCENES" DETAILS ARE COMPLETED.

AND, BY THE WAY, THE WILLIAMSON COUNTY FAIR IS CELEBRATING ITS 15TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY NEXT MONTH. THE CHAMBER WILL JOIN US FOR THE RIBBON CUTTING AT 5:30 ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 2ND AND I WANT TO PERSONALLY INVITE YOU ALL TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE, WWW.WILLIAMSONCOUNTYFAIR.ORG AND SEE WHAT'S COMING BACK, WHAT'S NEW AND SEE HOW YOU MIGHT GET INVOLVED.

THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE. MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS THIS WONDERFUL WILLIAMSON COUNTY.