



## State of Carrollton in 2018

Carrollton, Georgia is a city in motion. We are altogether growing, altogether thriving, and altogether strong. Our elected officials, Mayor Walt Hollingsworth and Council Members Gerald Byrd (Mayor Pro Tem), Met Lane, Rory Wojcik, and Jim Watters, are committed to representing our citizens fairly and considering all voices in every decision. Our city leadership strives to ensure outstanding services and wise stewardship of resources. And every city department works hard each day to make sure Carrollton is a place where residents can build great lives, businesses can succeed, and visitors can feel at home.

Exciting things are happening in Carrollton, and we are proud of the many things we've accomplished this year.

### **FINANCE**

The City of Carrollton continues to be financially stable, and to wisely steward our resources. In July of 2018, the City adopted the 2018-2019 Budget, only seven percent of which is funded by ad valorem property taxes. On September 10, the mayor and city council voted to maintain the current millage rate of 4.60 mils. This remains the lowest rate in our area, and we have not recorded an increase in the actual millage rate since 1993.

All other revenue sources, including other taxes, licenses, permits, and charges for services, continue to show economic growth, and we are proud to continue our long-standing and productive partnership with Carroll County in providing property tax billing and collection, election, fire protection, and recreation services to the citizens of Carrollton and Carroll County. These partnerships greatly increase the efficiency of these services and ensure they are delivered at the lowest possible cost to our citizens.

Despite two major construction project expenses, the city's combined cash reserves remain strong. As of August 31, 2018, total cash reserves were \$18,170,753. Of this total, \$8,279,839 are General Fund cash reserves, \$6,777,708 are Water Fund cash reserves, and \$2,091,072, are Sanitation Fund cash reserves. All totals will increase substantially in the coming months as insurance premium taxes and ad valorem property taxes are due by the end of the year.

## **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

This year, we received a Federal Hwy-GDOT Off-System Safety Improvement Grant for the installation of pavement markings and signage. The project covered 57 city streets and approximately 31.5 miles of roadway. Additionally, we performed asphalt milling/patching/resurfacing on various streets, with the larger projects including River Drive, Fourth Street, University Drive, and Tom Reeve Drive. After completing traffic analysis on several streets, we installed several traffic calming and safety measures.

Notable concrete sidewalk repairs and improvements included the installation of sidewalk on North Park Street from Kingsbridge to Park Place Apartments and traffic calming measures on Fourth Street and River Drive. Also, the city, county, and county schools completed the installation of sidewalk on Central High Road, which included the installation of a mid-block crosswalk with a Rectangular Rapidly Flashing Beacon (RRFB) to improve pedestrian safety in the area.

We also completed construction of the city recreation maintenance building, which replaces the previous building, destroyed by fire in October 2016, and Fire Station #22, which was damaged by a tornado in 2017.

We further completed the Maple/Presbyterian Realignment Project, which improved the traffic flow and pedestrian safety at the intersection of Maple and Alabama Streets. As part of this project, we made water, sewer and stormwater improvements to improve the city's utility infrastructure and minimize possible future problems and repairs.

The Alabama Street Trailhead for the Carrollton GreenBelt was completed in the spring. This project was funded through a Recreational Trails Program grant from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Additional grant funds were recently awarded from DNR for the southside spur for the GreenBelt.

Construction of the Alabama Street GreenBelt spur is planned for 2019. This spur will connect the recently completed Alabama Street GreenBelt trailhead with Legends West Park in West Carrollton. The project is funded through a Transportation Enhancement Grant from the Georgia Department of Transportation.

The city was awarded a \$1.5 million Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank grant for Phase I of the Bankhead Highway Streetscape Improvement Project. This project is expected to begin in the spring of 2019.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

55 new single-family homes have been constructed or are under construction at a total estimated value of \$15,421,187. Two multi-family buildings were recently permitted for Northwind Place Senior Living at an estimated value of \$8,196,000.

The total estimated value of commercial and industrial construction since January 1, 2018 is \$48,703,268, which includes TMC Health Pavilion at \$29,385,769, the CHS

Indoor Facility at \$6,700,000, Decostar at \$2,751,334, the OFS Addition at \$2,177,390, Target at \$1,310,814, Carroll EMC at \$1,084,943, and Pilgrim's Pride at \$1,021,588.

The city will break ground on three new homes in West Carrollton as part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program by the end of 2018. These homes will be available for sale in late spring with down payment assistance offered through the program.

The city also issued 1,776 business licenses for 2018. Of these licenses, 168 were for new businesses.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Effective January 01, 2018, we moved payroll in-house, which will save the city about \$100,000 annually. We also implemented centralized purchasing throughout the city on July 1, and hired a manager to oversee purchasing for all departments. Further, we received a \$10,000 grant for our employee wellness program and encourage all employees to work toward a personal fitness goal by providing different wellness incentive programs and offering free biometric screenings at our annual employee health fair.

## **WATER AND WASTEWATER OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT**

Both the water and wastewater departments continue to earn recognition for demonstrated excellent performance. The water treatment department earned the Gold Award for Perfect Operations from the Georgia Association of Water Professionals for the fourth consecutive year (nine years total), and the wastewater department was awarded the Platinum Award for 11 consecutive years of perfect operations by the same organization. For the third year, we were named District 3 Best Tasting Tap Water by the Georgia Section of the American Water Works Association and also earned the People's Choice Award for Best Tasting Tap Water in the State of Georgia.

The rehabilitation of the concrete basins at the water treatment plant was completed successfully this year. This project required the repair of failing portions of concrete that have been in place since the 1950s and 1970s, and included the application of a protective coating to all internal basin walls. The grit removal replacement project at the wastewater plant headworks has also been completed and is now in operation. The second phase of this project, bar screen replacement, is underway and should be completed by the end of the year. This entire project replaces equipment that has been in continuous operation for 30 years with more efficient, technologically advanced equipment that uses fewer moving parts.

The facilities maintenance department has completed several major projects in the last year while maintaining daily preventive maintenance activities for each facility and performing necessary repairs. Major projects include installation of variable frequency drives for the water filter plant, which will reduce electrical demand and extend the service life of equipment; replacement of the heating and air conditioning for City Hall; installation of altitude valve and associated appliances for Bankhead water tank; and installation of the northside pumping station.

In addition, we have extended our partnership with the Georgia Water and Wastewater Institute, and continue to provide training to most of the licensed water and wastewater professionals throughout the state.

### **SANITATION AND SYSTEMS**

The sanitation department continues to strive to provide the best possible service. We receive few complaints and address them immediately, and our employees are some of the hardest working in the city. Currently, we collect more than 450 tons of household garbage, 1,700 tons of commercial garbage, 70 tons of recycling, and about 250 tons of debris each month. We also sweep and clean about 200 miles of road right-of-way each year – all with only 23 employees.

Our four shop mechanics are certified to work on everything from fire and garbage trucks to small engines, and they maintain more than 300 vehicles and pieces of equipment, which saves the city thousands of dollars every year.

The systems upkeep department includes 18 employees who constantly maintain our more than 300 miles of water lines and 175 miles of sewer lines. Most of these employees have been with the city for a number of years and take pride in their jobs and in the service they provide. The department maintains on-call personnel 24/7 to respond to water and sewer problems in the timeliest possible manner.

### **CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

The Carrollton Center for the Arts has had a banner year. We completed a three-year plan which included a restructuring of the Arts Commission, adoption of a new vision and mission statement, and a comprehensive review of public programming and services. In celebration of our fifteenth anniversary, we also completed a facility renovation, which allowed us to offer additional programming in the visual, performing and literary arts. We significantly expanded our art educational offerings, as well as our dance, theater, and music programs, and we booked numerous exciting professional performances, which helped to bring new audiences into the facility and contributed to our ability to increase participation by more than 40 percent. Total participation at the center increased to 58,663 this year.

In total, we offered 24 classes, 31 camps, 47 performances, 11 exhibitions, five special events, and five community events – a total of 123 programs. In addition, the community rented our facilities 73 times for private events and programs. So far this year, membership is up 40 percent, season ticket sales are up 200 percent, and sponsorships have doubled.

### **DOWNTOWN**

The Amp in downtown Carrollton hosted more than 50 events in 2018 with more than 55,000 people in attendance throughout the year. Acts like Marc Broussard and Who's Bad, a Michael Jackson tribute band, brought crowds from throughout the region.

Summer kids' movie nights continued to be a great success. Main Street introduced "date nights" at the Amp in 2018, featuring movies for our older audiences.

Mayfest and Taste of Carrollton both continue to be benchmark events for Main Street. Mayfest, the city's annual arts and crafts festival, included more than 200 vendors and more than 5,000 people in attendance. The annual Taste of Carrollton, held in September, remains Main Street's largest fundraiser. Even with inclement weather, more than 30,000 tickets were sold for the event this year. The Main Street program also joined with the Center for the Arts and the University of West Georgia in hosting the third annual Art Takeover in March. This one-night event showcases local artists and musicians inside restaurants and shops downtown. Octoberfest, a day of fall fun with activities for kids and a blues and craft beer festival, continued to grow in its second year.

The Bradley Street Depot continues to be a popular event venue, generating more than \$90,000 in revenue for the city so far in 2018.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

Our parks and recreation department continues to be one of the top departments, not only in Georgia, but in the nation. In 2018, we won the coveted Agency of the Year award, the highest honor given in our association at the state level. We also won three other state awards, including the 2018 Volunteer Award, which went to Southwire's Project Gift for the Knox Park Community Garden. Additionally, we won ten awards at the district level, making us the most awarded department in the state.

Through public-private partnerships, alternative funding mechanisms, creative planning, design and development, and resident input, we continue to serve a community that is both growing and becoming more diverse in its service needs. We boast excellent citizen involvement, strong support systems, solid long-range planning, good fiscal resource management, wise environmental stewardship, and excellent program planning and assessment. Our parks and recreation facilities and programs are critical to maintaining our city's excellent quality of life, and to helping provide for the health and well-being of our residents and visitors. Our Senior Center is one of the largest in the West Georgia area and our athletic division continues to see increases in participation for youth sports. Our parks and facilities division oversees twenty-nine parks, as well as the 18-hole disc golf course at Hobbs Farm and the eighteen-mile GreenBelt – a total of 425 acres.

We also continue to play a significant role in local economic growth. In addition to programming, we hosted thirty-six tournaments and meets, which created \$9 million in economic impact and brought more than 52,000 people to Carrollton. Those visitors filled our hotels, ate at our restaurants, and shopped in our local stores, creating tax dollars for the city and revenue for local merchants. We're regularly selected for such events because of our excellent quality of service, and many events, such as the Special Olympics, have been hosted in Carrollton for several years running.

This past year, our staff has worked tirelessly to complete the national accreditation process, a quality assurance and improvement initiative which demonstrated an agency's commitment to its employees, volunteers, and patrons. We are one of only eight departments in Georgia – and the second smallest department in the country – to attain this high level of excellence.

## **FIRE**

In the last year, our fire department responded to 5,138 calls – about 428 per month or 14 per day – with an average response time of 4:45 minutes.

To ensure the most prompt and effective response, we added three additional firefighters in 2018. We also appointed fire captains to our ladder truck crews and established battalion chiefs to oversee emergency and day-to-day operations. We now operate four engine crews and a ladder truck crew daily and have 65 full-time firefighters and a full-time fire marshal in addition to administrative staff. We also improved health and safety measures for our firefighters by adding personal safety and decontamination equipment and increased our staff training. The majority of our firefighters have now received advanced training in firefighting, rescue operations, hazardous materials, and emergency medical care.

The new location of Fire Station 22, at the corner of University Drive and Lovvorn Road, provides better access and quicker response times. It's equipped with the latest technology and was designed to keep up with the city's projected growth for the next several years.

Our community outreach programs provided 1,199 hours of public education programs about fire safety, home safety, school safety, fire extinguisher use, CPR, first aid, automatic external defibrillator use, preventive health care, and severe weather preparedness in addition to industrial fire brigade training.

We continue to maintain an ISO rating of class 1, a rating attained by less than a quarter of a percent of more than 50,000 fire departments nationwide. Only a very few departments in Georgia hold this top rating, and it's important to our citizens as most U.S. insurers use the rating to determine home and business property premiums. Our specialized Haz/Mat response team is classified as a Georgia Emergency Management Agency Type II Team, which means that we are equipped and prepared to respond to incidents involving fuels, chemicals, radiological materials, biological agents, and weapons of mass destruction. The response team is capable of detection and identification of chemicals including solids, liquids, gases, biological, radiological, nerve gases, mustard gases, and blistering agents.

## **POLICE**

The Carrollton Police Department answered more than 65,600 calls for service.

Four patrol shifts work 12 hours each with seven officers on each day shift and nine on each night shift. We staff two school resource officers and five traffic officers, two officers are assigned to evidence/property/lab, and one is assigned to the Carrollton Housing Authority. Four bike patrol officers patrol the GreenBelt, the shopping centers, and other areas. These officers also distribute bicycles donated by local merchants to underprivileged children, as well as to the people in the Carroll County Re-Entry program who find a job but have no transportation. Our department includes one officer detached to the GBI drug task force and 12 detectives assigned to criminal investigations. Three officers are assigned to our in-house narcotics unit, a joint venture with the Carroll County Sheriff's Office and the University of West Georgia Police. One of our officers is a Georgia-certified Latent Print Examiner, one of only about a dozen in the state.

We work closely with P.A.R.C., formerly known as the West Georgia Rape Crisis Center, and Investigator Meredith Browning serves on the board. We also work with the Carroll County Emergency Shelter, which provides a safe place for victims of domestic violence, and we support the Carroll County Child Advocacy Center, which assists investigations by conducting forensic interviews with children who have been sexually, emotionally, and physically abused.

We also work constantly to build and maintain a positive relationship with the community through programs like the Citizen's Police Academy, held each year from January to March, which educate residents about law enforcement and demonstrate how carefully and diligently the police work to respect the rights of all citizens. We also conduct an annual special needs camp in conjunction with the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, and an annual youth camp. We host a monthly clergy luncheon for local pastors and community leaders to discuss community issues.

This year, we formed a cybercrimes unit, which operates within our criminal investigation division and assists our officers and other law enforcement agencies in the investigation of crimes involving digital evidence such as computers, cell phones, secure digital cards, thumb drives, any other device that stores data, cell phone records, and records from electronic service providers. This unit enhances investigations in which digital evidence is a factor, preserves the integrity of seized digital evidence, and provides expert testimony in court. It also investigates complex cases involving digital evidence, and provides assistance to officers and detectives in drafting digital evidence search warrants, gathering evidence from online service providers and cell phone companies, and obtaining video from video surveillance systems in businesses, homes, and vehicles. Cybercrimes officers also assist fellow police in using technology in investigations. The unit possesses some of the best digital forensic equipment and

software, and uses a new, secure, digital forensic lab. Unit personnel participate in ongoing training on various topics involving digital evidence and cyber-crimes, then pass the education on to other officers and prosecutors. This unit also maintains our pawn shop and secondary metal recycling database, which has allowed us to retrieve stolen items and solve crimes. It also assists in the maintenance of our department's online presence, which allows us to communicate crucial information to the public instantly and solicit their help in identifying suspects and solving crimes.

Further, the unit maintains the department's affiliation with the Georgia Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. This task force assists state and local law enforcement agencies in developing an effective response to cyber enticement, child pornography, and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The department also has an affiliation with the United States Secret Service Electronic Crimes Task Force, which offers investigative support with crimes involving digital evidence, provides training and equipment/software, and awards funds to forensic partners to help purchase additional equipment and software that will be used in investigations involving digital evidence.

## **TOURISM**

The altogether unique mix of attractions, events, lodging, dining and recreational opportunities in and around Carrollton draws visitors from all over Georgia, from other states and countries. Tourism spending locally has grown year to year for more than a decade.

- Visitors to Carroll County generated \$166.91 million in direct, domestic traveler expenditures in 2017, an increase of almost 6.5 percent over the previous year
- The tourism industry supported more than 1,421 jobs and created \$32.42 million in payroll in the county in 2017, nearly 5 percent more than in 2016.
- Visitors were also responsible for \$11.62 million in state and local tax revenues in Carroll. Each household in the county would need to be taxed an additional \$282 per year to replace taxes generated by tourism.
- Carroll County ranks fourth in visitor spending in the 17-county Historic High Country Travel Region and is 25th among all 159 counties in Georgia.
- Visitors to the Northwest Georgia Travel Region spent the most on food service, automobile transportation, retail, lodging and entertainment and recreation.