

## **Mayor envisions a world-class Tullahoma**

2016 is going to be a great year for the people of Tullahoma. I am extremely bullish and optimistic about the next 12 months. We have so much to look forward to with so many strategic initiatives coming together.

My chief job as Mayor is to define our vision and inspire the community to help reach the vision. It is critical we keep our eyes on our bold vision for Tullahoma to be considered world class in everything we do. From job creation, to cleanliness, to high school graduation rates and everything in-between, I want Tullahoma to be the best and considered a world-class community. So what is a world-class community? Here is my definition:

A community that is drug-free and safe for all citizens. A community that is clean and green. A community where everyone has the opportunity for a challenging and rewarding career. A community where citizens care, are engaged, are healthy, and make a difference every day. A community where the arts are prevalent and available to all. A community where children are valued and nurtured. A community where we look out for each other. A community that values our rich aviation and aerospace heritage. A community that appreciates and grows our retail, technical and medical strengths. A community where young adults want to remain, return to or relocate to raise their families. A community that strives for a quality of life second to none. A community where people want to invest.

We will continue to strategically design Tullahoma so young families want to remain, return or relocate here. Young families want to live in growing, vibrant communities with an emphasis on fitness, the arts and green initiatives. They want to live in safe communities with a great school system with plenty of activities for their children and technology to better communicate. They want access to fulfilling jobs.

Tullahoma offers what young families want in a community: emphasis on arts, sustainable living, fitness initiatives, high technology through LightTUBE, investment in our civic parks, Splash Island, renovated indoor pool and landmark Grider Stadium, new Pet Village dog park, soccer field lighting, greenway and park expansions with over 600 acres of parks. We also attracted world-class events such as the successful AOPA national convention, schools that lead the nation with the 1:1 digital initiative and academic achievement. Tullahoma has a low crime rate, access to over 100 local physicians, an entrepreneurial spirit and eco-system, and that is just scratching the surface.

We will continue to build on these strategic initiatives in 2016 and beyond.

We are inviting people and businesses to live and invest in Tullahoma so we must have places for them to go. Homebuilders built more homes in 2015 than in each of the past six years, and with the certification of our Business Airpark, we can better attract businesses to Tullahoma.

Tullahoma was definitely open for business in 2015, and 2016 looks to be even stronger. Over 100 new businesses called Tullahoma home in 2015 and I believe we are in for some exciting announcements in 2016, especially in retail. These announcements will continue to position Tullahoma as a retail and

healthcare destination. In fact, community-wide retail sales increased nearly every month 2015 over 2014. This is great for jobs and tax monies for city and school services.

We have so much potential everywhere you look. The Downtown Renovation project will be completed in 2016. We saw a great deal of investment downtown in 2015 and we will see even more in 2016. Downtown Tullahoma will once again be a focal point for our community and the Renovation has been a great catalyst for growth.

So, what are our challenges? We must take advantage of our strengths: incredible technology through LightTUBE and entrepreneurship through TN Investco. We are home to one of the smallest gigabit communities in America and home to one of only ten business incubators in Tennessee. This innovation cluster brings new capital and jobs to Tullahoma. We must leverage these strengths to provide more better-paying jobs for the people of Tullahoma. We also must better tell Tullahoma's story.

I will continue my job as Tullahoma's CEO, or Chief Encouragement Officer. I am asked daily how and why I attend so many community events. I believe it is important for the Mayor to be accessible and available to citizens, but more importantly, I attend so many activities to be supportive and encouraging. A little encouragement goes a long way to bringing out the best in people, whether it is children in school, businesses, church groups, civic clubs, or even families. I will continue to be the leader that helps make good things happen for everyone in Tullahoma every day, and to make a difference with a positive, encouraging attitude.

Tullahoma's citizens' work has been validated as we have been recognized as the Number 1 Micropolitan city in Tennessee for two years and the Number 2 city in Middle Tennessee for quality of life as measured by outside, independent organizations.

As Mayor, I am challenged by three initiatives I work toward every day:

- 1) "Great cities are intentional, not accidental." In other words, we must have a plan and take strategic steps to accomplish our plan
- 2) "Why can't Tullahoma be the best?" Some city is going to be the best.....why not Tullahoma? We should always strive to be the best and world-class in everything we do.
- 3) "If you really love Tullahoma, you have to help make Tullahoma better." We all have opportunities to improve Tullahoma, whether through your school, job, civic club, church, neighborhood, or household. Get involved. Make a difference. Leave Tullahoma better than when you found it.

In summary, Tullahoma is truly a blessed community. We have so much to be thankful for and so much to look forward to. It truly is a great day to be in Tullahoma.

Lane Curlee, Mayor  
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