

2022 City of Madison

State of the City Address: Mayor Bob Courtney

Madison on the Move

WELCOME –

Good evening everyone and welcome. Thank you for joining us for our annual State of the City Address. Thank you Ron Bateman and the Fairfield team for hosting us tonight. It is very special to be here because this place is a shining example of what vision and leadership is all about. And while Mayor Welch was not here to see it through, I am proud to have been part of bringing his vision to life for this project. This year is quite different than last year's address. Last year, the pandemic caused high unemployment, took our economy over the cliff and created a human toll as many families lost loved ones; and now we are dealing with inflation, supply chain issues, and an extremely tight labor market. While we can never dismiss the dangers of this virus, I am proud of our City and her residents in their response. **While some communities acquiesced to their circumstances, Madison was on the Move.** We adapted, planned, sought different outcomes, rolled up our sleeves and worked together to move Madison forward.

So why are we all gathered here tonight? I would like to take this time to report on our progress. When I first ran for Mayor, I campaigned on having a **head for business and a heart for Madison. Those words are more than a slogan. As you will hear tonight, they are promises kept.**

I often reference the term Clean, Safe, and Beautiful when talking about Madison. This is a three-word mission statement that drives all of our efforts in the city.

As your mayor, I promised you that I would focus on: **(1)** Improving Community Safety; **(2)** Increasing Economic Opportunity, and; **(3)** Improving our Quality of Life and Place for Madison. Tonight, I will share with you our progress on all three of these key initiatives. And I want to thank you, because **You all have made these results possible.**

Community Safety

Whether it's Police, Fire, Streets or Sidewalks, our public safety initiatives are changing the landscape in Madison. Under Chief Wallace's leadership, we implemented the recommendations of a diversified, citizen-led public safety steering committee which revised 13 of our Standard Operating Procedures, including police pursuits, use of force, implementation of wearable body cams, use of de-escalation tactics, and brought integrity into the evidence handling

process. We have implemented the use of new technology to catch the bad guys who aim to damage our community and harm our residents.

With unanimous City Council support, we made another major investment in safety by increasing full time officers by another 10% and adding additional capacity with the formation of a five-person part-time fully trained and licensed patrol team adding much needed resources for traffic management and specifically fighting drug crime. Over the past two-years, Narcotic arrests are up double digits in each year and property crime is down a like amount.

And, perhaps, you have heard of Operation Predator Net, resulting in the arrest of over 20 men, alleged to have come to our community to solicit minors. After gaining state and national recognition for this effort, the city was invited to join ICAC, Indiana Crimes Against Children task force. It is exciting to bring more resources to our community than ever before, and we can never rest when it comes to protecting our children.

Recently, I had the honor to recognize the contribution of our entire law enforcement teams for outstanding service to our community. We recognized Chief Wallace, Detectives Perkins, Scudder, Cutshaw, and Harris, Officer Midgett, Prosecutor David Sutter, Sheriff Thomas, Hanover Town Marshal Caldwell and our

circuit court and superior court judges DJ Mote and Blaine Goode. Our partnerships with these public safety leaders and the Indiana State Police have taken criminals off the streets and made Madison a safer community for all.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there is no more important investment that we can make than to keep our community safe. **Please give an applause for all of our law enforcement who are with us tonight!**

Led by Fire Chief Bill Devries, Madison has a rich history of an all-volunteer fire protection service. These brave men and women responded to over 550 emergencies last year including 50 fires. When they are not doing that, they are training to be the best. These professionals logged in over two-thousand training hours last year. **I will never forget the night of June 18th, 2021. Ravaged by flash flooding, our brave officers, firemen, and first responders performed water rescues through the night, saving 35 people from their homes. While the waters eventually receded and the damage was significant, thanks to their heroic efforts, there was no loss of life that night.** Whether its structure fires, search and rescues, dealing with hazardous materials, or simply installing free smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in homes, **they always answer the call for help. I offer my sincere appreciation for the men and women serving in our police fire,**

and emergency responses, including our central dispatch professionals. Please join me in thanking them.

Now, let me talk a minute about something that connects us all; Our streets and sidewalks. It is often said that “if you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there.” In our quest for a clean, safe, and beautiful Madison, we have recognized the importance of how people move around our in community and have invested in improving our streets and sidewalks. Our team of employees and engineers are committed, just as I am, to planning, development, and execution to improve the overall experience for residents and visitors.

We believe Madison is way more than just someplace you drive through to get to another destination. **We believe Madison is the destination.**

But to achieve our potential, we have to invest in making our community safer and more pedestrian friendly, and safer. That is why we are letting data drive our decisions on where to invest. In his book, the Walkable City, author and city planner Jeff Speck, writes that we need to cultivate four qualities for the pedestrian; (1) be useful; (2) be safe; (3) be comfortable, and (4) be interesting. In the past year, we did multiple things toward accomplishing those goals: We

developed a comprehensive plan just for sidewalks. In 2021 we invested in road and sidewalk repairs across town, including a new sidewalk on Eighth Street near the schools and on East Street heading toward the riverfront; and 2023 will bring brand new sidewalks all along Clifty Drive. And we also recently announced a \$1.5 million investment in the Oak Hill subdivision that will bring new roads, sidewalks, and much needed improvements to its park. This comprehensive data-driven approach will make a lasting positive impact on our neighborhoods which leads to a viable community.

Finally, following an extensive evaluation of our prized Main Street and steering committee work, we took a bold step toward our destination development plans. After inheriting former State Highway 56 through downtown, we re-imagined the potential of that street, upgraded the condition of the road, changed the traffic pattern to add a calming effect, and reducing the potential for traffic accidents, we secured a \$5 million grant and are our way toward a \$20 million multi-year reinvestment complimenting our Destination Madison strategies.

Economic Development

On the issue of economic development, I want you to know that we are relentless in our efforts to drive investment to Madison. Each of you here tonight is key to our successful investment strategies. **Whether you are donating your time to serve on a board or committee or you are making a financial commitment in a business or in your home; You are elevating Madison.**

Together, we have placed Madison in a position to have an economic renaissance like never before.

We have developed a unique approach that is giving Madison the regional recognition it deserves. Answering a call by Governor Holcomb that spurred a state-wide economic development competition, in a matter of months, we developed Destination and Workforce investment plans for a READI grant. With 42 partners locally and by partnering with the Southern Indiana Regional Development Authority, we believe we can create almost a quarter billion-dollar economic impact on our community over the next three years.

I was honored to be part of the RDA's state presentation team which was awarded one of only five maximum grants statewide of \$50 million to invest across our region. These investments will be made all across our community with

infrastructure, parks, roads, trails, housing, industry, and tourism initiatives downtown and on the hilltop, as well as, a new vet tech school at Hanover College in partnership with Ivy Tech. **We will further develop Madison as the gateway to Indiana that it is and the regional gem we know it can be.**

Just this week we one of our home grown, most successful businesses took another step forward. I'd like to thank our special guest Harold Hunt, his family, and his team at SuperATV for their investment in Madison, growing our community and creating well-paying jobs. With SuperATV's expansion and other partnerships we have formed who will invest in Madison, we will be announcing over \$100 million of housing, retail, and industrial development (all of which is on the hilltop) in the coming weeks. Thank you Harold and your great team at SuperATV.

Economic opportunity doesn't stop there. I'd like to pause now to share with you the first in a series called Madison on the Move which focuses on blight elimination and acknowledges the contributions of Trevor and Van Crafton and Dr. Judy Koehler and many other investors across the community. **(CUE UP VIDEO).**

Our “uber” PACE program has spurred historic preservation efforts all across our neighborhoods, raising property values by 30%, reducing crime, and driving unprecedented investment. We have proven that by leading the way with our own financial commitment, we can incentivize new capital investment and produce better outcomes.

By leveraging our own capital, we have created incentives that produce nearly a 4:1 investment return and in the past year we have created more investment than the previous seven years combined, **all without demolishing a single contributing historic structure.**

And speaking of investment, I have to acknowledge all of the great work being done to grow our tourism industry, a \$41 million economic power punch to our community and small businesses. Just two years ago, tourism was on the ropes but with leadership from JCBT, VMI, Madison Main Street, Madison Arts Alliance, the Madison Music Movement, and our Chamber of Commerce, our tourism economy is not just surviving, it is thriving. From record innkeeper tax collections, creation of sports tourism, improved governance, emphasis on arts and entertainment, and an assertive focus on branding, Madison’s tourism is alive and well. These groups have also implemented tools to measure economic

impact in real-time so they too can make good investment decisions. **To the hundreds of volunteers who give your precious time to make Madison better, I sincerely thank you.**

We are also very excited about the new partnership with Norton KDH and the newly formed Bethany Circle foundation promoting health and wellness across our community. And whether it is economic, social, or cultural, there is one person here tonight involved in all of it; **Bill Barnes**, thank you and the Community Foundation of Madison and Jefferson County for making a difference here at home.

I would be remiss when talking about economic development if I didn't mention the City of Madison railroad and airport. The city's airport is home to 13 businesses, has a flight training school, hosts the new PHI Medical Helicopter Base, and has a fantastic annual air show. And in 2021 after a decade of attempts, we secured the northern approach Runway 2-1 that furthers our airport's capabilities and appeal. These two enterprises alone have contributed over a \$70 million annual economic impact to the region.

We also operate our own utility company that supplies almost 800 million gallons of clean drinking water a year to nearly 80% of Jefferson County. **For a small town, we have a big reach!!**

Being innovative, more sophisticated, and data-driven in our approaches has created unparalleled results, and much needed efficiencies on how we govern. And how do we pay for all of these investments? We do it by leveraging our capital to attract private investment. A mix of capital from grants, TIF funding, leverage, general budget, and most importantly private investment, is what it takes to make this happen over time.

Quality of Life/Place

After sharing with you about our accomplishments in public safety and economic opportunity, I am most thrilled to talk with you about Madison's quality of life. **Would you agree that it is exceptional? I certainly think so!**

Making Madison our focus through a collaborative, community-based investment model, has generated tremendous results and is attracting a new generation of Madisonian.

Madison boasts over 280 acres of parks with endless activities for visitors and residents of our city and almost 40 miles of sidewalks and our fabulous Heritage Trail. And last year we embraced our golf cart community by making it easier to traverse between the downtown and hilltop and the county. We are nearing completion of a new parks master plan that will upgrade our parks, especially our neighborhood playgrounds where our children play. They deserve modern equipment, ADA accessibility, and a basketball court that is not deteriorated. We are committed to making that happen. And with a \$2 million grant from Lt. Governor Crouch and OCRA and significant support from the city's redevelopment commission, we are half-way through the restoration of the iconic Crystal Beach swimming pool for the next generation to enjoy.

And when I mentioned doing things more efficiently, we have created information systems that have allowed us to manage better. **What we don't manage, manages us and if we can't measure it, we can't manage it!** In the past year, we have reduced deficits at Sunrise Golf Course by 54%, created new marketing strategies, doubled the profit at our city campground, slashed youth and adult sports participation fees by approximately 50%, and adopted technology platforms that have moved over 20,000 transactions on-line that were once all handled manually.

Our Quality of Life not only involves our parks, but the entire culture of Madison has an influence on us. From music (which is plentiful because we are Indiana's Music City) to art to outdoor recreation and the fantastic events sponsored by our Library such as the Smithsonian Institutes "Waterways" Exhibit, enjoying a leisure boat ride or a Rockin Thunder ride on the Ohio River, or a drive in the country, there is something for everyone to enjoy in our beautiful community.

Looking to the future

Looking to the future, in addition to our public safety and economic development initiatives, we are building a social services strategy designed to help those most in need. With collaboration from our county commissioners, county council and county Sheriff, we will be implementing addiction treatment in the new jail. A recent grant award from the Indiana Department of Mental Health and Addiction that will be managed by Jefferson County will allow us to hire a community coordinator to perform a needs assessment for a residential treatment center and coordinate the implementation of strategies for mental health and addiction. Amber Finnegan, thank you for your service to JRAC and leadership in obtaining this grant award.

With the newly formed Public Arts Commission, by developing a strategy around arts and entertainment, we will recognize the value art has on a community for our quality of life and as a driver of our economy.

Through the redevelopment commission, we have committed \$150,000 of financial support to help Habitat for Humanity bring the dream of new homeownership to families across our community and as of today we have already provided a \$250,000 grant to stabilize the historic Ohio Theater so that additional restoration work can happen and have it become operational again.

We also intend to embark on the largest infrastructure investment plan in the history of Madison. Over the next several years, we will invest \$3 million in bringing new sidewalks to Clifty Drive, widen Wilson Avenue for better industrial traffic management, make a multi-million investment in Main Street, make a major investment on our Riverfront that includes the overlook, a permanent state at Bicentennial, new housing, and park investments; we will drive large investments on our hilltop, and make a \$13 million investment in our clean drinking water supply and distribution systems.

We will lead the investment in revitalizing the Mulberry-Second Street corridor that will include newly designed gathering spaces, parking, housing, **and a downtown grocery store will come to fruition in time**; we will develop a new Gateway Welcome Center at the entrance to Madison from the bridge; and have already acquired property to protect our open space corridor on the riverfront. And we are partnering with the ACOE to bring much needed solutions to the flash flooding problem we have experienced with the Crooked Creek watershed.

CLOSING:

Tonight, I have shared some of our successes with you; talked about some of the challenges; and laid out our vision for the next several years. I really could spend hours talking about all the strategies to ensure that Madison is clean, safe, and beautiful and our delivering on promises made about public safety, economic opportunity, and quality of life. In the new environment, Madison is not only a tourist destination but the destination of a lifetime, bringing new permanent residents to our city as we continue to grow

The implementation of this vision would not be possible without the hundreds of volunteers we work with across the city to improve Madison for all of us. It would not be possible without the support from Governor Holcomb and Lt

Gov Crouch and all of our state and local elected officials, all of whom are committed to Madison's growth and success. I hope this is crystal clear: the employees of the City of Madison are our biggest asset and some of the most dedicated people I have ever know and I know they truly believe in our pledge for a Clean, Safe, and Beautiful Madison.

The city is greatly represented by seven city council members, Curtis Chatham, Lucy Dattilo, Carla Eades-Krebbs, Patrick Thevenow, Dan Dattilo, Jim Bartlett, and Joshua Schafer and Clerk-Treasurer Katie Rampy. I also want to thank my family, my wife Tammy Courtney who can't be here tonight, and my friends for their love and support. It takes two Tammy's to keep me between the guardrails, Tammy Courtney and my assistant, Tammy Acosta, both of whom are instrumental to our success.

I would like to close by sharing with you a quote from one of my all-time favorite athletes and Olympic distance runner Steve Prefontaine. While he passed away unexpectedly in a car accident in 1975, his legacy lives on today. Adorning my office is Steve's motto: "To give anything less than your best, is to sacrifice the gift." We have abundant gifts and gifted people in Madison. That is the real key to our success!

I believe that 2022 is the year in which we will reap a rich dividend for all of the effort so many people have invested in Madison, **a small town with an historic future. Madison is on the Move.**

THANK YOU and GOD BLESS MADISON!