



Good evening and welcome to the State of the Town Address. It's an honor and privilege to present the first State of the Town from our new Town Hall.

For the past few years, our Town has found a way to tell our story in a clever and entertaining way and tonight is no different. I'm proud to present tonight's video, which highlights many of our Town's proud accomplishments from the past year. This year's video is based on the latest trend of video streaming. With Netflix, Hulu and Disney Plus being all the rage, we thought it would be very timely and hopefully entertaining. You'll see familiar shows on which we've taken a bit of liberty. Shows like Survivor, Stranger Things, The Bachelorette and House Hunters to name a few.

(State of the Town Video Plays)

This clever State of the Town presentation highlights many accomplishments for which we are all very proud. I'd like to thank Amazing Studios and our staff for working to prepare this overview of the past year.

The team sitting behind me works together to execute the strategic goals established annually by our Town Board. Reaching our goals is a process. It starts with a vision, then we develop a plan. It means staying focused and working together. That's how we achieve the Town's goals.

Last year will go down as a "banner" year for Fuquay-Varina.

Several new Town facilities opened.

I am very proud of our new Town Hall which opened to the public in October. With almost 30,000 square feet, this state-of-the-art facility is conveniently located and supports continued growth and investment in downtown. The facility was designed to enhance the customer experience for businesses and residents visiting their Town Hall. You can see some of the results of that investment in this Town Board Room. Our new town hall will serve us well for many years to come. Assistant Town Manager Jim Seymour managed the Town Hall project and did an exceptional job.

Also, the Fuquay-Varina Arts Center opened to the public in mid-May and quickly became the "hub of the arts" in the heart of Downtown Fuquay-Varina. In the first seven months of operation, the Arts Center theatre sold on average 1,000 tickets monthly and in 2020 the staff looks to build on that success with more concerts, live theatre and family events. I'd like to thank Maureen Daly, Director of the



Fuquay-Varina Art Center for working diligently to help our Town Board realize the vision of a successful Arts Center.

The Terrible Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant held a ribbon cutting ceremony in March. The project expands treatment capacity from 1 to 3 million gallons per day. This expansion helps our town be prepared for the future. The project also won an Excellence in Construction Award this year. Public Utilities Director Jay Meyers has been instrumental in leading this very successful project which came in ahead of schedule and under budget.

Wake County is also planning and opening new facilities in Fuquay-Varina and this is due in great part to efforts by our Town Board. There are eight new facilities in total. They are as follows:

- The Fuquay-Varina Community Library opened this past fall and it supports future expansion to become a regional library.
- The new Willow Spring High School opened in Fall 2019 with students from Fuquay-Varina High School, as their own school began renovations. A brand-new Fuquay-Varina High School will open in 2021. The combined investment in these two schools is a significant \$185 million dollars.
- South Lakes Elementary School is under construction and will open in Fall of 2020.
- Herbert Akins Road Middle School will begin construction in Fall 2020 and be opening in 2022.
- E-44, which will be named Hilltop Needmore Road Elementary School, should begin design in Spring 2020 and open in 2023.
- Fuquay-Varina Middle School's new facility on Bowling Road is currently in design and is anticipated to open in 2024.
- Community Engagement on future educational uses of the Fuquay-Varina Middle School Campus should begin Fall 2020.
- Fuquay-Varina continues to grow. The US Census population estimate as of July 2018 is 29,200, representing a 63% growth since 2010 and 270% growth since 2000.

April 1st will be Census Day, and I believe our population is well over 30,000 people based on local estimates. It will be important for every head of household in Fuquay-Varina to make sure every man, woman, and child is counted. We need to do this to make sure Fuquay-Varina receives its fair share of federal funding.



Ultimately, the Census makes a difference in funding for our roads and public infrastructure and how we are represented in Raleigh and Washington. I challenge every resident to make Fuquay-Varina Count in 2020.

Jonathan Cox, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources continues to stay busy.

In 2019, the Town accepted 143 acres from Wake County and entered in a joint use agreement with the Wake County Public School System for another 21-acres. This combined total acreage is known as Hilltop Needmore Town Park and Preserve. In February 2020, five miles of walking and biking trails opened to the public. With this additional property, the Town now owns and maintains a total of 500 acres of park land.

This year, the updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan will come before the board. The plan lays out enhancements for parks, facilities and greenway for the next five years.

Expansion of the Town's Greenway Trails will continue when construction on the Park Depot Greenway begins this month. The trail will connect to sidewalks along Old Honeycutt Road that ultimately provides access to other parts of town including downtown.

Fleming Loop Park will open to the public this Thursday evening at 6:30 PM, and you are all invited. The park includes seven lighted multipurpose fields, parking, permanent restroom and concession facilities, a state-of-the-art playground, picnic shelter, and one-mile walking loop. I would like to thank Jonathan and his team for having done a fabulous job bringing this first-class facility to Fuquay-Varina.

Tracy Stephenson and our Engineering Department manage a wide range of infrastructure projects in our growing community and they do an outstanding job.

Since 2010, the Town has had close to \$45 million dollars in roadway investment backed with close to \$18 million dollars in federal and state grants. This is a tremendous investment for a town our size.

Construction on the final leg of NW Judd Parkway began in 2019 and is expected to be finished in early 2021.

Intersection improvements at Old Honeycutt and Purfoy Roads created better traffic flow at this very busy intersection.



Intersection improvements that will include dedicated right turn lanes at Highway 55 and NE Judd Parkway will begin construction in late 2020.

A stream bank restoration project was recently completed at Historic Fuquay Mineral Spring Park, where our town began. This project, along with the planned bridge replacement, will enhance this focal point in the heart of our community and keep the park in good repair for generations to come.

Tracy Stephenson, our Engineering Director, has done an outstanding job at managing these projects and finding grant money to help finance them.

The Town continues to be recognized for excellence in financial reporting and with a AAA bond rating. This favorable bond rating benefits every taxpayer in Fuquay-Varina to promote quality of life and enable efficient and effective service delivery to our residents. JoAnne Crabtree joined our Town as Finance Director in June and she has been an excellent addition to our management team. JoAnne is not here tonight.

Citizens want and need information about their government and the Town of Fuquay-Varina provides it. Susan Weis, our Communications Director, has helped the Town get the message out that Fuquay-Varina really is a dash more.

This past year, the Town won top honors at the City-County Communications and Marketing Association Awards for our State of the Town video. In 2019, there were more than 1 million-page views on the Town's website and the Town is proud to have more than 38,000 followers for all our Town Facebook accounts.

Downtown is the heart of our community and our Town Board has always placed a major focus on enhancing and supporting our downtown. This year, a Downtown Master Plan will be developed that will establish a guiding vision for downtown's landscape and identify commercial and residential needs.

Also, this year, kiosks will be placed strategically in the downtown areas to help with wayfinding and promotions.

This year, we look forward to construction beginning on a downtown mixed-use development project at the corner of South Main and Raleigh Streets. This project will add 50,000 square feet of office and retail space and sixteen condo style apartments in the Fuquay district.

Our Fire Department remains very busy. In 2019, the Fire Department responded to 4,430 service calls. In April, a new 105-foot ladder truck will be placed into



service. It will be staffed on a full-time basis and will respond to structure fires and all types of emergencies.

A design for a new fire station near the northwest corner of town will begin this year.

The town has a Class 2 Protection Classification from the North Carolina Insurance Commission which means lower insurance rates for our citizens. This rating is earned through hard work, staff education and training. The Fire Department works hard to keep us all safe and I appreciate everything the fire department and Fire Chief Tony Mauldin do to keep us safe.

In July, we added Human Resources Director Wendy Moody to our team. As the Town's population grows, so do the number of employees needed to service that demand.

The Town's full-time staff is currently 264 and hiring talented and experienced employees will continue to keep Wendy very busy now and in the future.

Our IT Department is hard at work supporting efficient Town operations and they are exploring several software tools to promote operational efficiencies, customer convenience, and public engagement. I am excited about the opportunities the next year will bring. Scott Clark and his team do an excellent job.

Scott continues to be the point-person for Ting as the company expands their fiber network to residences and businesses providing greater connectivity in Fuquay-Varina.

Our Inspections Department issued 764 single family permits in 2019 along with hundreds of multi-family apartment permits, which is a record, and performed 22,000 field inspections. Chris Hinnant, the Town's Inspections Director, leads this team which consistently gets high marks for professionalism and customer service.

In 2019, the Town's planning jurisdiction was expanded by 9,200 acres. This expansion helps to ensure that developments are consistent with one another and assists with the Town's future land use plans. It also helps the town to better manage infrastructure expansion as land develops.

Pam Davison was promoted from Senior Planner to Planning Director in January. Pam will provide leadership as this department continues to provide technical support and guidance for the town's development activity.



Our Police Department is a shining star in the community thanks to Chief Fahnestock.

Comparing five-year data from 2015 to 2019 there has been a 50% decrease in violent crime, a 43% decrease in property crimes and an overall decrease of 42% in Part 1 Crimes. Part 1 Crimes are the serious crimes.

In 2019, Fuquay-Varina Police responded to almost 73,000 calls for service, attended more than 9,000 hours of continuing education and participated in 500 community events.

This year, a major focus will be completing construction of the new Police Department. Similar to Town Hall, the new Police facility will promote the use of technology, enhanced training facilities, and an improved work environment that will help our outstanding Police Department to be the best they can be.

I am very proud of Police Chief Laura Fahnestock and her leadership in our community. I think we have one of the best, if not THE best police departments in North Carolina.

Our Public Works Department is hard at work keeping our community safe, clean and looking it's best. In 2020, Public Works staff are exploring opportunities with our partners at Wake County to expand recycling and waste disposal, to do our part to keep our Town and planet sustainable for today and generations to come.

A sincere thank you to Arthur and his staff for a job well done.

Economic Development has been a major focus for the Town Board over the past few years and we are making strong progress in meeting our economic development goals. This past year, the Town's Business Park received State recognition as a "shovel ready" site which makes our site competitive with other business parks in the state and around the nation.

We will continue recruitment to the Town's Business Park Site with the help of our Big Five partners: T.E. Connectivity, John Deere, Bob Barker Company, South Bend and Aviator. We will also continue our recruiting efforts of special medical providers and medical campus-like developments.

I offer my congratulations to Jim Seymour who was promoted in January to Assistant Town Manager. Jim served as our Economic Development Director for 8 years. We are currently interviewing for that position and look forward to continuing the Town's successful track record in Economic Development.



A few final thoughts. Again, it's a real treat to be speaking to you from our new town hall. As I walk through Town Hall, I'm impressed with how the vision of Town Hall has turned into the reality we had all hoped for. We've done a good job with the building and I'm proud of that fact it really has become a destination in downtown.

The building functions well. The utility and inspections windows and reception area are customer service focused. The parking spots out front are convenient; the plaza area is attractive. The board room is much larger and can accommodate more people. The building is centrally located and is filled with technology.

The artwork throughout the building is lovely and a nice reflection on Fuquay-Varina. The building is modern and fresh.

I'm proud of our new town hall and I hope you share in that pride as well.

If you haven't voted at an early voting site, I'd like to encourage you to get out and vote in tomorrow's primary. We were fortunate to have an early voting site at Falcon Park due to efforts by the town board and working with Wake County. Again, get out and vote. It's important.

I'd like to take a final opportunity to thank our Town Board for their excellent leadership.

Elected service is not easy, but rather a calling to help the community. This Town Board is the best board I've ever had the privilege to work with.

I'd also like to thank Town Manager Adam Mitchell, Assistant Town Manager Mark Matthews and Assistant Town Manager Jim Seymour for ALL their hard work in helping the town to accomplish so much during this transformational time in Fuquay-Varina's history.

We have an amazing team which includes our staff, management and town board. This team works very well with one another.

Our citizens, elected officials and staff, help to make Fuquay-Varina a dash more. I want to thank everyone for coming out tonight to hear the State of the Town.