

## **City of Zachary**

### **Mayor's Annual Message**

#### **2024 State of the City**

January 9, 2024, celebrated the first anniversary of the City of Zachary's new administration and another successful year of hard and dedicated work by City employees.

The city is fortunate to have outstanding guidance and district leadership from its five elected Council members: Brandy Westmoreland, John LeBlanc, Ambre DeVirgilio, James Graves, and Jennifer Boyd. Their selfless and dedicated efforts on behalf of their constituents are evident daily. Working alongside and learning from each of them during this inaugural year has been a pleasure, and we look forward to maintaining this positive and collaborative relationship well into the future.

The City of Zachary revealed its annual audit report on its financial statements for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. We are happy to report that our city stands in exceptional financial health. The audit results confirm that we have managed our resources prudently and effectively, positioning us in a robust economic state.

The administration is committed to "Continuing Progress with An Eye Toward the Future" by enlisting public support and involvement in a shared vision of what the entire Zachary community views as necessary and attainable for its near future. With a commitment to this goal, the city has observed numerous positive changes and improvements throughout the year.

Construction is underway for a new 8-million-dollar police station, housed on 21 acres and slated to be complete by the end of 2024. The new headquarters was built to expand and grow, with the ability to add extra police officers and detectives under one roof. The future of health care is taking shape in Zachary with a 90-million-dollar hospital expansion project for Lane Regional Medical Center.

Enhancement of roadways throughout the City of Zachary has been completed city-wide through a 3 million Annual Road Rehabilitation Project. Drivers will now see resurfacing and patchwork on over 40 streets as part of an ongoing effort to provide residents with better accessibility, aesthetics, and smoother rides. In addition, the city will soon see updated traffic signals at intersections, with new software installations to monitor traffic signal lights operated by the City of Zachary. The software installation will enable the City of Zachary to communicate through a central control system managed by the City of Baton Rouge's Traffic Engineering Department, allowing for real-time monitoring and control of traffic signal timings.

Building on a vision of attracting and retaining new investments, Ashleigh McHugh joined our staff as an Economic Development Director who will work directly with our city planner. Through this partnership, the City of Zachary has identified areas of improvement and is working to prioritize projects that will enhance the city's attractiveness to businesses and residents. The team is also working on revitalization plans in Downtown Zachary and has consulted with an Urban Planner who is shaping and visualizing our downtown needs and wants. Great places don't just happen; careful thought, design, and planning are necessary for a vibrant city.

Additionally, Brandie Triche accepted the appointment of Chief Administrative Officer, joining the administrative office in January 2024. Brandie has a thorough knowledge of daily operations and a profound understanding of fiscal management.

The City of Zachary will soon roll out its new Master Plan, guiding growth and development in Zachary. The current plan was adopted in 2010 when the city's population was approximately 10,000, half of what it is today. Through community input and participation in the planning process, the new plan will ensure equitable growth and development.

Our city proudly boasts the number one school district in the State, renowned for its academic excellence and innovative programs. Our Class 1 Rated Fire Department, along with our low crime rating, ensures the safety and security of our residents. With the trained team of professionals on staff, we can be proud to live in a city where the water system received a perfect score of A+ based on federal and State water quality, operations, maintenance, and infrastructure standards.

Today, I want to reaffirm that Zachary's future is bright as the city stands firm. Our economy is thriving; our neighborhoods are vibrant, reflective of the rich tapestry of cultures that call our city home. As we plan for future generations, I eagerly anticipate what lies ahead while paving the way for a brighter tomorrow.

Sincerely,

David McDavid

Mayor