

Mayor Johnson Touts Kyle's Successes and Accomplishments at State of the City Address



Kyle Mayor Lucy Johnson began her last State of the City Address by painting a bigger picture of what lies ahead for the city. Mayor Johnson explained that the projected growth for Texas, Central Texas, Hays County, and the City of Kyle could result in over half a million people living in Hays County and approximately 85,000 of those residents would reside in Kyle by 2032.

"It's clear that this state and this region are undergoing massive changes, and that we are one of the swiftest developing area in the US," said Mayor Johnson. "With growth, as we all know by now, comes challenges, but more importantly, opportunities. Kyle is part of the greater Austin Metro Area, and make no mistake - it is Metro areas that will mold our country's future."

Mayor Johnson stressed that economic development and intelligent planning are necessary to sustain population growth and Kyle has both of these elements in place. As evidence to that effect, she pointed out that City staff have worked with the council to build up the City's financial reserves, increase the City's bond rating, streamline the development system, and many more accomplishments.

Citizen involvement was also a key topic of the Mayor's address. The City of Kyle has 18 different boards and committees that are comprised of citizen volunteers that advise the council on their policy-making decisions.

"We have so many young people who are excited for the future, who are ready to embrace change and new opportunities, and even do crazy things like run for Mayor," explained Mayor Johnson. "And we have, and this is what makes us really unique, so many older residents, senior citizens, veterans, old timers, and all around good 'ole boys, who have completely embraced us."

Kyle's continued economic development was also a key point in this year's address. Mayor Johnson highlighted that the city has collected sales tax for the current fiscal year in the amount of \$2.2 million, compared to that same amount for all of the 2008 fiscal year. The Mayor also noted that the city's property tax has increased to \$1.5 billion this year, a 5% rise from last year.

A big part of those increases are due to the growth of the city's medical sector.

"The Medical services industry continues to boost Kyle's economy and contributes heavily to our commercial development," said Mayor Johnson. "In 2007, Kyle had less than 20,000 square feet of medical space. By the end of 2014 that number will be over well over 800,000 square feet."

The annual State of the City Address is hosted by the Kyle Area Chamber of Commerce, and Mayor

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Johnson thanked Chamber Executive Director Julie Synder, Chamber Staff, and the 160 chamber members in attendance for their work to help grow the city's business community and improve the city's strategies to attract visitors and tourists.

"The Kyle Area Chamber of Commerce is an essential ingredient in Kyle's economic success," said Mayor Johnson. "In 2013 the Chamber added 99 new members and hosted 35 individual ribbon cuttings. The Chamber also provides educational lectures and workshops to their members, including discussions on networking, social media, and business development. But they do stuff even cooler than continuing education too."

Mayor Johnson demonstrated Kyle's growth by showing that the city had issued 42 new commercial permits and 320 residential permits in 2013. She also mentioned that the city's low unemployment rate of 3.9% was due to the growth of both large and small area businesses.

This year's State of the City's address also touched on the successes of the city's improved and streamlined planning process, increases in programs and facilities offered through the Parks and Recreation Department. Mayor Johnson also commented on the reduction of crime statistics achieved by the Kyle Police Department of the past couple of years.

"In multiple categories, crime is down or off its highs from recent years," said Mayor Johnson. "The number of assaults is down below 200 for the first time since 2010, and we've seen decreases in the number of burglary's, car break-ins, and DWI's reported as well. Even drug related arrests, up from last year, are noticeably lower than what they were in 2010 and 2011."

Transportation was also a key topic in the Mayor's speech. Mayor Johnson discussed the importance of the successful bond election last May where Kyle voters authorized \$36 million in bonds to improve and expand five key roads in Kyle. She also went on to encourage the passage of an agreement with the Lone Star Rail District to allow Kyle to be a part of the Austin to San Antonio commuter rail program being planned for the area.

"Rail is steadily becoming recognized across the nation as the best way to relieve traffic congestion and move people and products efficiently," explained Mayor Johnson. "The federal government is dedicating more resources than ever to rail development, and I believe Lone Star is in a great position to benefit, but we have to approve the station first."

Mayor Johnson went on to tout the city's commitment to education and workforce development. The opening of the Austin Community College – Hays Campus in Kyle, as well as programs offered by the Kyle Public Library, were recognized as important and critical components in developing a workforce that can take advantage of the job growth being experienced in the City of Kyle.

The success of the recently created Kyle Area Youth Advisory Committee was highlighted by Mayor Johnson as an example of how to actively involve area youth in their community and government.

"Just a few months ago council approved new bylaws for the Youth Advisory Committee, written by the students themselves, along with expansion to 16 members, and placing representatives from the

committee to honorary positions on the Economic Development and Tourism Committee, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the City Council itself," said Mayor Johnson.

The Mayor concluded her remarks by thanking the citizens of Kyle for electing her encouraging participation in the upcoming election.

"Early voting starts April 28th, and I suggest you reach out and get to know some of the people who would lead our city into the next three years," said Mayor Johnson. "They don't all have to be like me, they just have to understand what a special thing Kyle has going for it."

The Mayor's speech in its entirety and the accompanying slide presentation are available as attachments below.

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Supporting Documents



[State of the City Speech 2014](#)



[State of the City Presentation 2014](#)

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