



CITY OF HOLTVILLE

121 WEST FIFTH STREET

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"THE CARROT CAPITAL OF THE WORLD"

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am honored to serve as your mayor this year and to be here tonight to share with you a report on the state of our City. I have also been honored, in the last two years and going into my third, to serve with an amazing group of people which constitute the city council past and present.

I'd like to start this evening by introducing our Mayor Pro tem, Colleen Ludwig; Council-member and last year's mayor, Richard Layton; new Council members David Bradshaw; and Julieta Durazo; and our City Treasurer Pete Mellinger.

In addition, I'd like to introduce our talented and hard-working City Manager, Directors and staff who are here tonight:

City manager, Laura Fischer
City attorney, Steve Walker
City Clerk, Glyn Snyder
Public Works Director, Gerry Peacher
Finance Manager, Rosa Ramirez
Fire Chief, Alex Silva
Interim Police Chief, Rick Watson

And a special thank you to all who served on the Centennial Committee, to the Chamber, and to our city staff who continue to impress us with their hard work and dedication.

In this first month of the year 2009 we as Americans find ourselves in times of economic uncertainty and change. However, we are also seeing the fear of uncertainty give rise to a renewed sense of: optimism, unity, and possibility. This

optimism extends from the White House to city hall, from East Coast to the West, from urban cities to rural and close-knit communities like our own.

Our City of Holtville shares in these times, and while it's a time of cautious spending and tempered growth, our city has begun its second hundred years with a firm economic footing and well poised to take advantage of opportunities for enhancement and growth of our city with a steady and responsible hand. We have just celebrated our centennial year with a proud list of achievements, and we continue to have a lot to look forward to as we begin our second hundred years together:

2008 has really been a year of accomplishments:

- The City brought in almost \$2 million dollars in grant funds to provide services to the community.
- Most notably, the City received \$800,000 dollars from Cal Trans used for various street improvement projects including the construction of the 400 block of Fern Street.
- The fleet of City vehicles has been expanded with the purchase of two new environmentally friendly, electric vehicles necessary for our Fire and Public Works departments.
- We received \$400,000 in additional street improvement monies from Proposition 1B.
- And \$70,000 in grants improving equipment and services to our fire department.
- The City has been the proud recipient of a substantial USDA grant with which we have begun important improvements to our Water Plant. This project continues to move forward at a steady pace and is currently ready to bid.
- In addition, Through grant funding we have continued to strengthen and improve our social and community programs such as the city's Senior Lunch Program and recreation programs which have continued to see an increase in youth participation.

- The public had the exciting opportunity this year to participate in our Downtown Development Design guidelines which are now available to view online. These plans promote future development and expansion by providing uniform standards and ease of use while advancing our vision for the future of the city.
- Funding has allowed the city to set up a First-Time Home Buyers and Home Rehabilitation Program.
- Significant Capital Improvement Projects have been dedicated to enhance the look and enjoyment of our community.
- Our Beautiful Historic Lights have been refurbished and installed around the park for everyone to enjoy; restrooms at both Samaha and Mac Park have been rehabilitated; there's a new fence and softball diamond at Samaha Park; and the construction of a new volleyball court.
- We finally bid farewell to the wood paneling in the Civic Center, creating a new and attractive gathering place that is also updated to meet our Emergency Operation Center needs.
- Substantial Clean-up efforts have been made of city property and noticeable beautification around our downtown area with the planting of flowers around the park and the introduction of our new Centennial and Viking flags as well as holiday decorations around main street.
- 17 miles of city alley-ways were graded.
- The City acquired 9 parcels of Rail Road property, adding to the city's assets, and started clean-up by the Alamo River in anticipation of a future river park and nature trail.
- We're also happy to welcome a new business into town and opening soon; Hot Rods and Beer owned by John Prock.
- A Public Safety Building has already been designed and a consultant has been hired to bid the project. This project will provide us a much needed new fire and police station while also enhancing our downtown area. We are proud to announce that this project continues to progress steadily in 2009.

- In addition, a study has already been done identifying the best location and use for a community skate park facility. This project has brought out an unprecedented show of interest in local politics from our city's youth and I am happy to say that the council continues work toward making this happen.

It's also important to mention that while many cities are in serious financial turmoil due to budget over-projections and the state of the housing market, the City of Holtville's responsible budgeting has left us in a very stable financial condition and we are on target to meet our mid-year projections. This also leaves us in a unique condition to embrace new opportunities that come our way in 2009 and into the future.

I have more to mention than I have time so I will finish with recognizing the wonderful events that celebrated together in the centennial year beginning with the New Year Celebration and Lighting of our Historic lights; we held the 100 days in school/100 balloons event which was well attended by students and parents; we had a Cinco de Mayo celebration and ending in our fantastic Gala Event in December. All of these events were truly something to be proud of.

The year 2008 left every American the witness of economic and social challenges that were unprecedented in our lifetimes. The city of Holtville nonetheless proudly rounded out our centennial year with grace and significant accomplishment. On that note, we begin 2009, and our second century as a city, with challenging times ahead, but with a true and realistic sense of optimism, unity and possibility.

Thank you everyone for attending tonight and for your continued support of our wonderful City.

Bianca Padilla, Mayor City of Holtville