



# MODEL CITY MOMENTUM

State of the City • Nov. 5, 2021

In the fall of 2019, I delivered my first State of the City address. I, like everyone else in the room, looked forward to the upcoming year and the goals we would achieve as a city. Six months later, those goals unfortunately were put on hold as we dramatically altered services, restructured finances and learned to operate in a pandemic. Despite all the adversities we have faced over the last 18 months, Kingsport, like it has done for more than 100 years, successfully weathered the storm and is now well positioned for the future.



The strength of our economy is evident through reinvestments in our legacy industries, commercial redevelopment and the construction of new housing at a rate never before seen in our city. To support growth and redevelopment, we have invested a record amount of dollars to improve the infrastructure that supports our city. Additionally, we continue to invest in projects that enhance the quality of life for our residents and visitors.

Collectively, all of these investments, both public and private, create the balanced approach necessary for the long-term success of the city we love.

Finally, the financial health of our city is strong. Thanks to conservative budgeting and growth in our primary revenues (sales tax and property tax), we have a general fund balance of more than \$20 million, the city's highest since 2007, as we emerge from the pandemic.

Kingsport is well positioned to meet the needs of today and tomorrow!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris McCartt". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Chris McCartt  
Kingsport City Manager



# EDUCATION

*The resiliency of Kingsport teachers, administrators, staff, parents and students is apparent as education thrives in our city despite the numerous changes they faced and successfully navigated this year.*

Kingsport City Schools continues the mission to inspire, cultivate and impact students in our community. Some highlights include:

- **Washington Elementary School** is a designated Tennessee STEM school in 2021, preparing students for success by promoting learning in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics.
- **Jackson Elementary School** again earned a "Leader in Me Lighthouse School" recognition for continuous improvement in the areas of culture, leadership and academics.
- **Lincoln Elementary School** again earned gold level "RG12B Model of Demonstration School," implementing a behavioral systems framework for all students.
- **Dobyns-Bennett High School** ranked in the top 5% of all high schools in the country, and 112 graduates in the class of 2021 held a 4.0 or higher GPA.
- **Dobyns-Bennett High School** Cyber Tribe team finished 10th in the world.
- Nine members of the graduating class of 2022 at **Dobyns-Bennett High School** have been named Commended Students in the 67th Annual 2022 National Merit® Scholarship Program.
- **Robinson Middle School's** Science Olympiad team ranked first in the state.
- Many of our outstanding athletics programs are having great success this year as well.





# PROSPERITY

***The Kingsport Economic Development Board continues to pursue new business and encourage growth across the city through projects in several sectors including retail, manufacturing, services, housing, municipal and business parks.***

The push to expand the focus beyond traditional large industrial/manufacturing businesses is apparent: Downtown Kingsport alone has welcomed 18 new businesses so far in 2021 with more expected by the end of the year.

The board also recently selected a developer for a residential community at Brickyard Park, which will include 350 residential units for both rent and purchase. Groundbreaking is expected in spring 2022 for a new community that will offer many amenities, downtown proximity and an expected \$1 million property tax benefit for Kingsport and Sullivan County once the community is complete.

Today, there are nearly 2,300 residential units in various stages of progress ranging from site plan approval to under construction within the city limits. Since March 2020, Kingsport has welcomed almost 2,000 new families who have moved from 49 states, producing \$194 million in real estate sales.

All of these developments are now easier to manage with the introduction this year of new software for the building department that benefits builders, developers and citizens by increasing functionality and simplifying the development process. The software makes it easier to access permit applications, look over project reviews and more, which streamlines the system for our citizens.



Brickyard Park  
Residential Development





# INFRASTRUCTURE

***We have improved infrastructure to increase safety and connectivity in our city.***

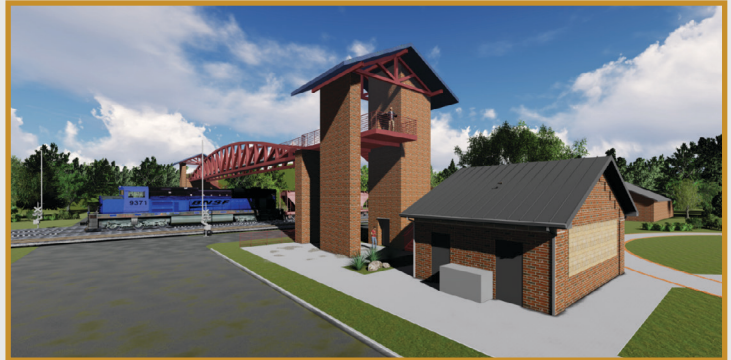
In 2021, more than \$12 million has been invested in resurfacing roads.

A \$680,000 Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Multimodal Access Grant will be used to add sidewalks and improve crosswalks along Fort Henry Drive in Colonial Heights.



## Brickyard Park Bridge

Kingsport has been awarded a \$1.85 million TDOT Transportation Alternatives Program grant to support the construction of a pedestrian and bicycle bridge that will connect the Brickyard Park development and downtown Kingsport.



# RESIDENT SERVICES

***Kingsport made great strides in serving our residents in 2021.***

The city launched ConnectKingsport, a new smartphone app that connects citizens with city services and information. It allows residents to report any non-emergency issues such as sidewalk damage, potholes, graffiti, streetlight outages, code violations and more.



## New City Hall

We consolidated the city's most public-facing departments, which were previously located in six different buildings, into one new City Hall location at 415 Broad St., providing improved efficiency, accessibility and convenience to the community.

Although our curbside collection of recyclables has paused, we're actively enhancing our existing recycling drop-off locations and planning for additional sites. These sites increase recycling convenience and will remain available after curbside collection resumes.





# QUALITY OF LIFE

*Kingsport is a place where families can work and play with amenities usually found in much bigger cities.*

- Bays Mountain Park & Planetarium celebrated 50 years of family fun and adventure in 2021. A new 341-seat amphitheater is planned at Bays Mountain as well.
- Kingsport Aquatic Center had a great summer season, welcoming the public to the outdoor lap pool, the most recent Aquatic Center expansion.
- Miracle Field was named a 2021 "Project of the Year" by the American Public Works Association.



- Construction planning is underway to start development next year for Riverbend Park, located along the Holston River on Fort Henry Drive in Colonial Heights.
- Lynn View Playground was dedicated this fall adjacent to the Lynn View Community Center.
- The Scott Adams Memorial Skate Park Complex at Brickyard Park is underway. The park also will include a new bicycle pump track.
- Goats are clearing Cement Hill in 2021 to prepare for a new park featuring walking trails and overlook spots.
- Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner David Saliers announced the Kingsport Greenbelt as a winner of the 2021 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards.



# FISCAL SUCCESS

*The City of Kingsport is committed to pursuing sound fiscal practices in service to the citizens.*

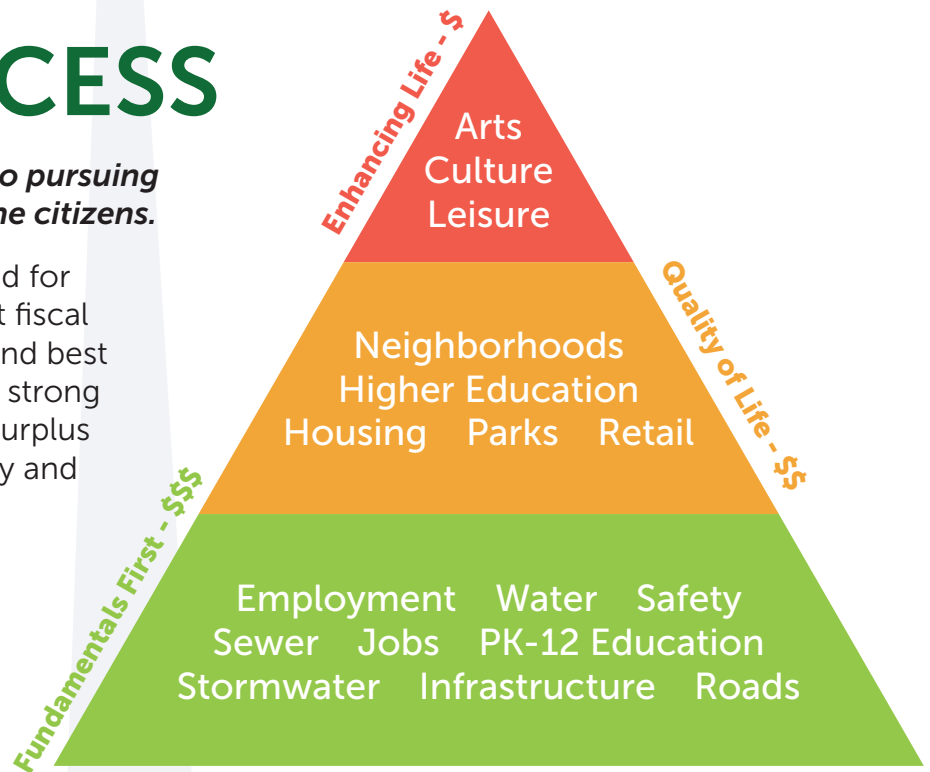
City staff has budgeted and accounted for \$225 million in transactions in the last fiscal year. Through budget management and best practices, the city enjoys consistently strong financial performance, an operating surplus in the general fund and great flexibility and liquidity with available assets.

The city received the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award this year for meeting nationally recognized guidelines for effective budgets.

Moving to FY-22, Kingsport has an approved balanced budget with no tax increases that allows many department budgets to return to pre-pandemic levels, and we expect Kingsport to continue to experience growth in the local economy.

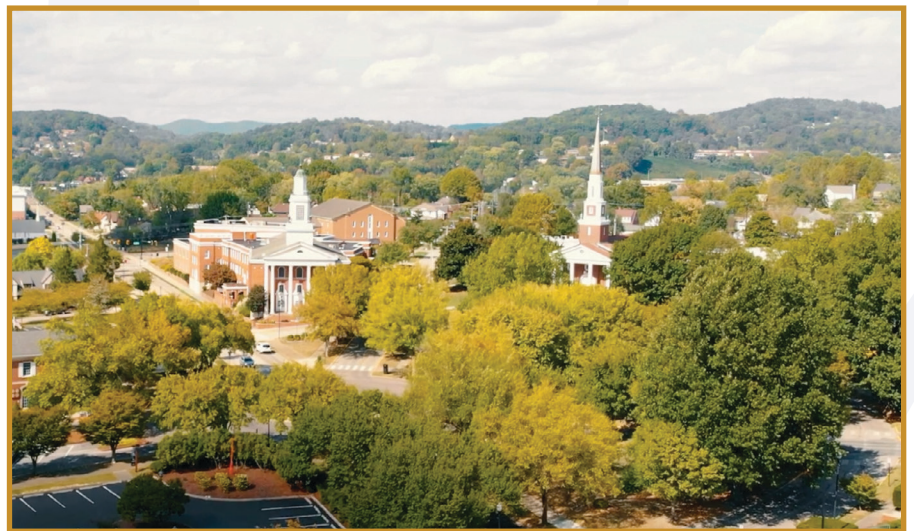
## Kingsport has:

- Tax rate of \$1.8783
- AA Rating from S&P Global
- Aa2 Rating from Moody's Investor Service
- Current debt of 5.89% of taxable assessed property values. The debt limit is 4.11% below the city's imposed maximum and 14.11% below the state's imposed maximum.



## Foundational Fundamentals

*The pyramid illustrates the hierarchy of needs that city officials use to guide Kingsport's capital budget and prioritize improvements.*



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