

2020 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

New Haven Mayor Steve McMichael

Thank you for joining us this evening. Thanks to Solitaire and the entire staff of the The Orchid for the wonderful meal, we are fortunate to have a facility of this caliber in our great city!

Before we get started, you may have heard the confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus are getting closer to Allen County every day. Clerk Treasurer Natalie Strock and I have established a team of city department heads who are closely monitoring the situation. This team is working in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security and the Allen County Department of Health to devise a plan should the virus pose an immediate threat to the Citizens of New Haven. Currently it is the stance of the County and our City that no immediate large scale action is required, but I would still encourage our employees and our citizens to practice proper hand hygiene, including refraining from shaking hands and to avoid any close personal contact.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our City Council Representatives, all of which are in attendance this evening. Councilmen, would you please stand so I can introduce you.

City Council 1 st District	Floyd Ball
City Council 2 nd District	Jeff Turner
City Council 3 rd District	Craig Dellinger
City Council 4 th District	Mike Mowery
City Council 5 th District	Matthew Kennedy
City Council At-Large	Dave Cheviron, and
City Council At-Large	Terry Werling

As a former member of City Council and council President, I know how hard each of your council members work to make New Haven a great city. Thank you council members for your service.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our Clerk-Treasurer Natalie Strock, it is a pleasure working with her every day. We are collaborating to Build a Better New Haven on a daily basis.

I am honored to be your Mayor, New Haven's 7th Mayor. Our future is bright and our outlook is strong. Your city team has a Bold Vision for our future!

I have the pleasure of working each day with a dedicated team of amazing employees. Your city's staff takes great pride and does an amazing job in providing services to you and the entire community. Last year I knocked on thousands of doors and I heard what you have said loud and clear.... New Haven wants more shopping and dining opportunities - so we created the Dogbone and Downtown Economic Development Target Areas, allowing City Council to provide potential tax incentives to businesses that typically would not qualify including hotels, restaurants and retail.

New Haven wants the speeding issue to be addressed, especially on side streets and in neighborhoods. Our entire Senior Staff has collaborated on how each department can help mitigate the problem. In-house engineering studies on the potential need for additional stop signs and 4-way stops are currently in process. Soon you will see repaving of Lincoln Highway from Norm's Point to Broadway and a new alignment including a road diet and on surface bicycle lanes. And in April you will start to see portable speed bumps that will be installed in neighborhoods around the city - all in an effort to make New Haven safer and more pedestrian and family friendly.

New Haven wants roads fixed, or at least a plan to address issues on a timely basis. Our Street and Engineering Departments are evaluating how we prioritize projects and how we can get the most bang for the buck. We

need to allocate additional funds to make the needed repairs. I have reached out to council members and expressed the need for a bold vision and have suggested they consider enacting a wheel tax...similar to what most towns and cities in Indiana have done to combat the problem with the deferred maintenance of our roads. This user fee on vehicles would generate approximately \$175,000 per year that would be **100%** committed to road improvements. Now, I know no one wants to be any additional taxes, myself included, but I have listened to the desires of the community to repair our roads and streets and this is the only way we can do it.

New Haven wants more transparency in government. We are communicating in more ways than ever - a new website with easier access to public information, a vibrant social media presence, live streaming of Board of Works and City Council Meetings, and I am proud to say that our boards and commissions are represented by many new community voices - voices not heard in the past.

New Haven wants abundant safe, clean drinking water and wastewater disposal - essential services, at the lowest cost possible. The Administration, along with the Clerk Treasurer, have been working hard to identify additional efficiencies, cost saving measures and internal policy changes. We will not let up on looking for the best way, at the lowest cost to provide these services while I am your Mayor.

We share one common purpose: to make New Haven the best to place to live, work, play, run a business or visit in Northeast Indiana. Our core values are Integrity, Accountability, Transparency, and Innovation.

I have the best job in all of Allen County! I have the opportunity to work every day with a dedicated team of well over 150 employees. Our Senior Staff lead their departments following our core values and for the shared common purpose. Since taking the oath office just 70 days ago, Clerk-Treasurer Natalie Strock, Senior Staff Members and I have reviewed policies, implemented efficiencies and re-evaluated nearly everything your city does on a daily basis, including changing the hours of city offices in an attempt to better accommodate our residents.

Our Senior Staff includes many familiar faces, and a few new ones as well. I would like to acknowledge these great dedicated individuals. I would like our Senior Staff to kindly stand and remain standing when I mention your name.

Returning members of the senior team are, Fire Chief Josh Hale, EMS Chief Doug Call, GIS Director Dave Schaab, Utility Superintendent Dave Jones and Parks Superintendent Mike Clendenen.

Staff additions since last year's state of the city address include Police Chief Jeff McCracken and HR Director Elizabeth Hoffman.

Our Engineering Department is now headed up by the city's first City Engineer, Darrin Good. And we are seeing great results already!

Our Planning Department is led by Rob Gutierrez who has brought a whole new light and perspective to the department and to the BZA and Plan Commission.

Pone Vongphachanh is our city's first Community and Economic Development Director. Today is actually her first day on the job. Welcome Pone! Pone has worked previously in Governmental Affairs, Community and Economic Development and is a wonderful compliment to the team.

And our longest serving Senior Staff member Deb-Anne Smith as the Mayor's Executive Assistant, now serving in that capacity for myself and the previous 2 mayors Lynn Shaw and most recently Terry McDonald.

Please join me in giving our Senior Team and all of the great employees of the City of New Haven a hand.

So what does a day in the life of your government look like? From Fighting Fires to providing safe drinking water.... An abundant essential supply of safe drink watering, and a comprehensive waste disposal system.

- ✓ Recreational opportunities for all ages: From Jury Pool to Senior Lunches, from Baseball and T-Ball diamonds to Pickle Ball Courts. And a well equipped and staffed fitness center.

- ✓ Public Safety: Did you know that New Haven has been ranked a top 20 safest city in Indiana 2 years in a row? Our Police Department not only protects our citizens but is involved in the community in many ways including our SRO program at New Haven High School and National Night Out programs to mention a few.
- ✓ Our Fire Department is a great example of a blended career and volunteer force. All professionals who are expertly trained and committed to providing first class service. Our Firefighter/ Medics also provide life-saving service every day.
- ✓ Our Street Department maintains many miles of road throughout the city, leaf pickup, snow removal and so much more.
- ✓ Our friendly utility department does everything from creating new accounts, and accepting payments to water main repairs.
- ✓ Planning and engineering personnel work hard to make sure that projects are done correctly, not just for today, but for the next generation who will be responsible for ongoing maintenance and future repairs.
- ✓ Together your city team works hard for you every day to make New Haven the best Place to Live, Work, Play, run a business or visit in Northeast Indiana.

Essential Services, Recreation, Community Building - that's a typical day for the city of New Haven.

I have been at City Hall nearly every day since the day after November's election. The transition from the McDonald administration to the McMichael administration has been extremely smooth, actually, I am not sure how it could have been any better.

So here's what we have been working on:

In December, while still City Council President, I was able to lead the charge for the development of the 2 Economic Development Target Areas that I mentioned earlier. One that I have referred to as the Dogbone along S.R. 930 from Meyer Road to Hartzell Road, and one in our central Downtown Business Area. These EDTAs enable City Council to incentivize businesses to grow or locate in these areas - requested businesses like hotels, restaurants, retail and professional services.

In December, New Haven also became the first city in Indiana to pass a resolution as a city committed to Life. Many cities and counties in Indiana have since followed suit, including Allen County. New Haven also saw the installation and dedication of a Safe Haven Baby Box.

On New Year's Eve, the Community Center was full of residents and guests, including Congressman Jim Banks to celebrate the swearing in of your elected officials Clerk-Treasurer Natalie Strock, City Council members and myself. It was heartwarming to see the standing room only crowd celebrate democracy at work.

On New Year's Day at noon, I became New Haven's Mayor, With only six names on the wall Krueck, Brudi, Werling, Taylor, Shaw, and McDonald, I understand the responsibility and honor and I take my role very seriously and recognize that my name will forever be on the "wall".

I am proud to say that we were "Ready Day One" and hit the ground running with enormous energy and enthusiasm. There were no interruptions of service in your city. In fact, we began making improvements on the first day. New Year's Day also officially kicked off the city's first ever social media campaign. In just 70 days, the city's facebook page has quickly become a community resource for news, event information and even live streaming of City Council and Board of Works meetings. With well over 1100 likes and followers, we are communicating with our residents in ways never done in New Haven before - and there's more to come!

Our Community Engagement Director, Sarah Arnold, and our first ever Community and Economic Development Director Pone Vongphachanh and the entire Team New Haven are working to build and engage community!

Our Veteran's Initiative, New Haven Veteran's Council, led by Volunteer Coordinator Steve Kennedy, is helping bridge the gaps for New Haven Vets. The installation and dedication of New Haven's Clothes4Joes box in late January was very well received by the

community, and has been emptied multiple times. Each coat, pair of socks or toiletries helps a veteran in need in Allen County. And soon S.R. 930 inside of New Haven will be a memorial to the veterans of America's longest war, the war on terror, Operation Enduring Freedom Veteran's Highway. Thank you to State Representative Dave Heine for leading the charge at the Statehouse.

Our Senior Volunteer Coordinator, Donna Quandt, is working with Community Center staff to add additional programming aimed at making senior's lives more fulfilling. In New Haven we honor all of our residents, especially Seniors and Veterans.

We have been busy meeting with dozens of businesses and developers who are interested in investing in our great community.

We also have made dozens of visits to area businesses. These visits are to get to know the leaders of the business community and find out how the community can help them grow their businesses and grow the community.

Our Planning, GIS and Engineering Departments have been busy getting projects ready, including the long awaited, and highly requested reconstruction of Landin Road, which is scheduled to begin next Spring.

Other improvements on the drawing board are street repaving and additional trail and sidewalk projects along with some additional street lights.

It has already been a busy year for public safety, as we added a new police officer and are in the process of returning to full staff as our recruits will be returning from the state academy in a few weeks. Late last year, your ambulance service added another ambulance as service calls continue to grow every year. The men and women of New Haven public safety work hard every day to ensure your safety and health.

The Street and Utility Department, as always, has done a great job with snow removal – and we were fortunate to have had a mild winter this year. The Utility & Streets team under Superintendent Dave Jones seemingly does a million things every day - they just plain get things done.

The HR Director is in the process of a comprehensive analysis of job descriptions, functions and policy review along with coordinating an employee wellness fair and now helps with a centralized procurement system for many of the city's purchasing needs and we reinstated the City Intern program with New Haven High School in January - great way for our students to gain practical on the job experience.

There are exciting things happening at the Department of Fun with the New Haven/Adams Township Parks. In addition to Jury Pool, the Community and Fitness Center and all the great existing recreational opportunities, we will begin to see construction of the community center park and trails! I am excited about this project and I believe will quickly become the “hub” of New Haven. The park will include a football field, 2

playgrounds, several gathering areas, including one with seating and sunsails, pickleball and tennis courts, an area for food trucks and something I have been advocating for since the closure of Meadowbrook Pool a splash pad - - all part of the Regional Stellar Designation of New Haven and the New Allen Alliance *7 Bold Communities, One Vision*. New Haven is a great place to Play!

Speaking of Stellar programs.... Ground-breaking will occur soon on the Kady Gene Cove apartments which will provide our seniors with another housing opportunity - a project that will be connected by trails to the Community Center. New Haven is a great place to live!

Business growth continues in New Haven, plans include the development of the former Casad Depot site and other development areas. In the last few years there has been strong growth including expansions at homegrown Continental Diamond Tool, Seinko Gosei, Multimatic and CSC to name a few. International investment is at an all-time high with Multimatic headquartered in Canada, Trelleborg from Sweden, Sanko Gosei from Japan and SDI Larga, who just broke ground on a 16 million dollar expansion on Ryan Road is from Spain. New Haven is a great place to be in business.

Residential growth is a top priority for our administration. The first section of Victoria Lakes has filled up quickly and plans are in place for the next sections. Most existing neighborhoods are now full, and we have

been working with developers to potentially build hundreds of more homes in the next few years. New Haven is a great place to raise a family.

The state of New Haven is strong, but that does not mean that we do not face challenges. We will not waiver in our quest to continue to make New Haven an inclusive, welcoming place for all.

A recent increase in our wholesale sewer costs from Fort Wayne means that you can anticipate a rate increase soon. We are working hard through sound fiscal planning and efficiencies to keep any rate increase as low as possible.

The recent announcement of the departure of Do it Best provides both a challenge and an opportunity. I feel strongly, based on conversations with developers, brokers, and our economic development partners that the building will be filled quickly and most likely prior to Do it Best leaving in 2022.

Where some see challenges, I see opportunities - opportunities to introduce our great community to more residents and more businesses. And we will lead with a bold vision for New Haven and our future.

I am excited to announce tonight the official start of the Havenhurst Sports complex fundraising campaign. Councilman Turner will be speaking in a few minutes about this amazing project and why as a community we need to get behind it. I am 100% behind it, and I am confident that everyone here will be too after you hear the details.

Returning later this year after a few year's hiatus will be the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council directed by Deb-Anne Smith and the New Haven Citizens Academy which will be offered by the Mayor's Office.

But we have just begun.... Our Bold Vision will guide us into the future.

I would be remiss if I didn't take a moment to thank my predecessor Terry McDonald for his 40 years of service to the community, as a medic, police officer and the past 20 years as Mayor. Mayor you did a great job and I thank you for everything that you have done. And for those of you that may not know, Terry stepped up and served as our Interim Economic Development Director. This allowed me to find the right person for the position and to not have to rush into appointing the Director of Community and Economic Development. It has been an honor working by your side, as a resident, business owner, board and commission member, city council president, friend and now Mayor. Your dedication and commitment to New Haven are appreciated and will no doubt impact New Haven for generations.

Tonight, I am proud to introduce a new initiative. Every year I intend to recognize a New Haven Non-Profit as the "Mayor's Choice" for the year. This year, for the inaugural designation, I have chosen The New Haven Food Bank. The New Haven Food Bank has served the community for many years, offering a hand up every Tuesday from 9-11 a.m. at the

parking lot of Emmanuel Lutheran on Green. You heard Tom Kneller speak about the importance of feeding the community and the great work that New Haven Food Bank does. There is a donation box at the registration table if you would care to make a contribution.

New Haven is full of great people, people that give without seeking glamour or recognition, those who give time, treasure and talent to the community. One who understood servant leadership was Bill Fritch, I knew Bill, but after hearing dozens of stories of his compassion, caring and giving over the years since his passing I have been amazed at just how much he gave with never wanting anything in return, including the acknowledgment of what a great man he was and what a legacy he left.

Over the last ten years the Mayor, along with Diane Fritch, who unfortunately cannot join us this evening, has presented one New Haven resident with the Bill Fritch Memorial Award... past winners include:

2012 – Leon Davis

2013 – Craig Robison

2014 – Carol Whitner

2015 – Doug Geller

2016 – Terry Werling

2017 – Susie Platt

2018 – Katie Branning

2019 – Craig Dellinger

This year we had multiple submissions, all great people that do great things in the community, another reminder of how lucky we all are to call New Haven home.

This year's winner leads with a servant's heart, and I know that Bill is looking down from heaven agreeing. Actually, there is something different about this year's recipient.... The 2020 recipient is a couple, a couple that together have dedicated their lives to God, Family and Community. As the nomination, submitted by Fire Chief Josh Hale correctly stated you cannot attend anything Bulldog without seeing this couple there. From supporting Canal Days to Bulldog Baseball they are always there. Here are a few thoughts from the nomination submission:

“I met the nominee several years ago as a member of the Fire Department and continued to communicate with her over the years at many events. She is one of MANY individuals who reached out to support not me personally but my position when I became the Fire Chief. She clearly understood the difficulty and stress of the position. She came up to me at several events and asked “How are you doing?” “How's the Fire Department going”, she did that to show her support for the position, and her support of the community. I know it meant the world the numerous times that she would check on me, but in my heart, I know that she

“LOVES NEW HAVEN”, and would do that for anyone in any position for the City of New Haven, because they LOVE NEW HAVEN!!

I met him when I earned a full-time position with the Fire Department in 2006. I would speak with him at our monthly governing body meetings, and at events and functions of our community. He certainly exhibits a love for New Haven.

The civic engagement exhibited by both is ENORMOUS!! She has been involved with the Chamber for many years. They are both present at ANYTHING New Haven! If it's an event happening to promote the community - expect their presence. If it's a fundraiser for this community - expect their presence. If it's a high school Football game at New Haven on a Friday - they are present. I began to consider them for this award, and I thought I know in my heart they are deserving and would certainly make Bill proud.

What the impact their volunteer efforts have made for New Haven...as I have been sitting here and thinking about the many things I loved or was fond of Bill Fritchka for, as I age I realize we don't appreciate what we have, we don't say I love you enough, we don't say thank you enough. I think back to how Bill's son Todd made a huge impact on me personally, but I never got to tell him.

I have pondered over this for almost 3 weeks now, and I'm certain there is someone that has the love for them that so many had for Bill. Just

like Bill, they are at so many New Haven sporting events. While his truck isn't nearly as beautiful as Bill's and it's missing that bright red color...it's certainly seen many late nights at City Hall, many special meetings at the Fire Station, many special meetings with the Police Chief as he was previously the Council liaison for the Police Department, special occasions to plead his case with the old and now new Mayor and no doubt he will continue to have a huge impact on the Board of Works.

You can see that it is clearly a "way of life" for them. I state that, because whether it's their daughter Jamie or Jessica they always have some of the family with them at most of these events. I have a passion and love for New Haven, that I often hope someday my family can be as committed as they are. I hope as my wife and kids age, we still have that love for the community that we all attend these events together as a family. New Haven/Adams Township Fire Chief Josh Hale.

As I mentioned earlier, Diane Fritch is unable to attend this evening, but sends her love and appreciation for everything the recipients do for the community.

I have known both these individuals to be not only kind and supportive, but an inspiration as well. Ladies and Gentlemen, New Havenites, I am proud to announce this year's recipients of the Bill Fritch Memorial Award to Bob and Sue Byrd.

Like all of those who have given back by getting involved in the community, volunteering your time, blessing those in need with your own resources, by helping our Veterans, helping our seniors, helping those who need food, helping those on a baseball field or by giving back in another way through your own talents, we asked that you join us! Join us on this bold vision and get involved. THAT is what makes this great community. Join us and volunteer like so many other special people have, and simply because you love your community. For when we all do this, we can build a better New Haven together!

Thank you for coming out tonight. God bless you and God bless New Haven.