The power of community. The power of service.
Manager’s Message

In the 18th century, scientist and statesman Benjamin Franklin warned,

“When you finish changing, you’re finished.”

Scott Cook, 21st century entrepreneur and founder of Intuit, reminds us,

“We’re still in the first minute of the first day of the Internet revolution.”

Although centuries apart, both visionaries suggest we must continue to step out, join in and lean forward for Thomasville. Thomasville leadership, public and private, is working to create new possibilities for work and play.

Community organizations have partnered with the City to create a vision for expanding our downtown business district. The state planning association recognized this initiative with a 2014 award for outstanding planning.

Downtown Thomasville was selected by Georgia tourism officials to represent our region in a tourism promotion inviting national and international travelers to our state. It’s evident our merchants have created a statewide reputation for exceptional shopping and dining.

Our first business park in 24 years will be ready in 2015. The Red Hills Business Park will offer a new address for industry that in turn creates new jobs, jobs that offer economic opportunities for our citizens.

Thomasville is among a handful of municipalities in Georgia that collect no property tax, yet offers the breadth of utility services that fosters our community’s quality of life. We look to technology and operational efficiencies to control costs as we create the infrastructure to attract and retain business as well as support neighborhoods and our community institutions.

Leadership is taking initiative for the benefit of others. The council, the staff and I will always look for that next best idea to build a better Thomasville.

We consider it a privilege to serve you.

Sincerely,

Steve Sykes
Step Out

It has been said that to be truly successful, we must be willing to challenge ourselves, to take bold and courageous action, often in the face of uncertainty.

As uncertain as it seemed in 1996, the City of Thomasville stepped into a technology that promised fingertip-access to a new universe of information.

That year, utilizing telephone lines, the City introduced dial-up Internet service to customers.

In 2014, we offer a full array of telecommunication services riding a fiber optic band of light. CNS customers can send and receive data at speeds of 15 to 35 megabits per second, more than 2,000 times faster than the dial-up Internet of 18 years earlier.

The City has embraced Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technology which incorporates layers of data over a defined landmass as a means to analyze information. Today, with GIS technology, we are more efficient in problem solving and resource management in regard to our utilities, citywide planning and land use. GIS is a tool that touches almost every aspect of City services. In the recent November general election, staff developed a GIS-based app to track and map election results by census tract, reaping fast and highly accurate data.

Capacity, deliverability and system redundancy define an optimal city water supply and are necessary to meet the demands of neighborhoods and businesses. In 2014, through massive infrastructure improvements, Thomasville has guaranteed a community water system for the future. With this infrastructure initiative we have added a well, an elevated tank, increased our capacity, completed almost 12 miles of new line, including a 9.4-mile loop that ensures redundancy for fire suppression and general water supply. It is a water system that invites economic growth.

Step out.
The Energy Control Center operates year-round 24 hours a day, 7 days a week monitoring the City’s utilities infrastructure.
Join In

On Monday morning, courtesy of your Visitors Center, This Week in Thomasville comes to your e-mail inbox to tell you about the not-to-miss-activities sponsored by downtown, civic organizations, the library, arts programs and more. A 30-second review outlines just some of the ways we can connect, explore and scratch an itch to try something new.

This is what cities do; foster opportunities for gathering, interacting and building human relationships. Economic developers call it quality of life; city planners call it creating a sense of place.

Thomasville’s downtown is central to this community’s quality of life. In the first half of 2014, approximately 64,000 people attended over 100 downtown events. First Friday celebrations expanded to include music venues and the July 4th fireworks were relocated two blocks off Broad Street with food attractions on West Jackson. The intersection of Smith and Broad boasts art-inspired bicycle racks for easy downtown respites for local bicyclists. Three new businesses opened in 2014, among a host of existing premier retail shops and restaurants.

With a partnership among the City and local arts groups, further development of the West Jackson corridor includes a potential creative district, amphitheatre, and trailhead for the already in-progress recreational walking/bicycle path. These will be places for people to walk, shop, gather and play.

Hands-on programs with citizens are the hallmark of our police force and firefighters. School programs teach children about bullying and the six-week Citizens Police Academy immerses participants in video simulation, firearms safety and K-9 demonstrations.

The City’s fire clowns entertain as well as educate on fire safety measures. Positive relationships build lasting connections.

Join In.
Caterpillar Partners With United Way

Caterpillar, a corporate citizen in Thomasville since 1999, supports United Way with the proceeds from its annual golf tournament.
We first reported the genesis of the Victoria Park redevelopment project to you in 2009. It began as a vision for a revitalized neighborhood – new homes, rehabbed homes, a park, a streetscape and connectivity to the downtown business district. Drive down Victoria Place today and you will see a plan that came to life. Six residences have been remodeled, five constructed by Habitat for Humanity, and the Land Bank Authority has constructed its first cottage-style home.

But there is always more to do. Your City leadership engages in five-year goal setting as well as annual benchmarking of strategic objectives. Stimulating economic growth is always near the top of the list. This year, in partnership with Thomas County, a full-time economic development professional was brought on board to grow our industry base, freeing our key account manager and the chamber of commerce staff to focus on existing industry.

New business prospects can expect to see shovel ready tracts at the 293-acre Red Hills Business Park in 2015. Additionally, we are seeking to expand the state designated opportunity zones within the city so that more new businesses might receive state tax credits.

The city welcomes newcomer, Oilon, a Finnish company who chose Thomasville for its first U.S. operation. Sweet Grass Dairy, a local favorite producer of artisanal cheeses, has completed the engineering phase on a $3 million investment in a production expansion.

The grand opening of a compressed natural gas fuel station in July signals a major City milestone in transitioning to an environmentally friendly and cost effective alternative fuel. The vision for the station is to not only serve our own vehicle fleet but, over time, serve other corporate fleets in the region as well as individually owned CNG-fueled vehicles.

It is important for City leadership to think long term. It is a sound business practice.
$50K grant dollars for downtown merchant storefront improvements

18,413 population

SPLOST dollars
You said yes in 2012 to a special purpose local option sales tax. $2.3 MM improved our streets, sidewalks, stormwater & recreational facilities, & a countywide communication system. $3 MM is earmarked for Red Hills Business Park.

ISO fire rating on scale of 1 to 10; 1 is best. A good fire rating translates to better insurance premiums for all.

$1.3 MM in loans for energy efficient improvements

50 jobs
New industry, Olon, a Finnish-based manufacturer of industrial burners, anticipates 50 jobs over 5 years at its first U.S. facility.

$2.3 MM
improved our streets, sidewalks, stormwater & recreational facilities, & a countywide communication system.

$3 MM
is earmarked for Red Hills Business Park.

516,440,007 kilowatt-hours of electricity sold

510 fire/rescue medical

1,240 medical

516,440,007
kilowatt-hours of electricity sold

August 8

140,700 waste to landfill

106,094 call center rings

2,462 building inspections

510 Calls

1,240 Calls

127,521 police calls/assists

50 jobs
New industry, Olon, a Finnish-based manufacturer of industrial burners, anticipates 50 jobs over 5 years at its first U.S. facility.

$50K compressed natural gas-fueled vehicles saved $54K in fuel when compared to gasoline-fueled.

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16 community development events including neighborhood improvement projects & socials, National Night Out, Easter Extravaganza & Howl-oween
Mayor and City Council
at the new Broad Street bike rack

1 to r: David Lewis, Mayor Max Beverly, Mayor Pro Tem Greg Hobbs, Jay Flowers and Don Sims

1901-1903 J.T. Culpepper
1904-1905 S.A. Roddenberry
1906-1907 J.F. Pittman
1908 J.S. Montgomery
1909-1910 H.J. MacIntyre
1911 J.M. Dekle
1912 H.J. MacIntyre
1913 Roscoe Luke (resigned Oct. 1913)
1913-1914 W.E. Beverly (elected Oct. 1913)
1915-1916 J.F. Mitchell
1917-1918 M.M. Cooper
1919-1920 J.M. Dekle
1921-1924 H.J. MacIntyre
1925-1926 D. Roy Hay
1927-1928 W.E. Beverly
1929-1930 B.S. Inman
1931-1932 W.J. Powell
1933-1942 John W. White
1943-1947 W.J. Powell

1944 adopted City Manager with Mayor/Council form of governance

1948-1949 W.A. Watt
1950-1953 Frank V. Eidson
1954-1959 Heeth Varnedoe
1960-1961 Odis A. Johnson
1962-1971 Roy M. Lilly
1972-1979 Jack A. Bracey
1980-1985 Tom Faircloth
1986-1989 Earl Williams
1990-1993 Len Powell
1994-1997 Camille Payne
1998-2001 Roy Campbell
2002-2005 Rick Singletary
2006-2009 David Lewis
2010-2011 Camille Payne
2012-2015 Max Beverly

Mayors
20th and 21st century