

State of the City – Mayor Nichols

To the members of the City Council, Mr. Auditor, Tribal leaders, County and State elected officials, City employees, honored guests and my fellow Tulsans.

I am thrilled to be here in this space - for the first time in a very long time, the state of the city address is free and open to the public.

Thirty-nine Tulsans across now 41 mayoral administrations have served as mayor - leading a city nine years older than the State of Oklahoma.

Through the years Tulsa has faced both the depths of deep struggle and rose to the mountain top of prosperity.

One-hundred-and-twenty-seven years later, it would be easy to believe that no matter the challenge, progress always came naturally and was guaranteed for past generations of Tulsans.

It is that illusion of inevitability associated with Tulsa's progress that oftentimes blinds us to the road this city has traveled.

In time of struggle, we responded - knowing that with faith and hard work, we could accomplish anything.

In times of prosperity we built ourselves into a great American city known for our generosity and our willingness to take on big challenges.

Rather it be the worst of days or the best of days, Tulsa has always been strong and tonight, I am thrilled to report that even though we face some significant headwinds, we remain strong - and I'm here to talk to you about how this generation of Tulsans keeps us strong.

When I took office, I said progress will not come easy or in a short amount of time, but pledged that we would never shrink from any challenge we faced - no matter how big or complex.

I pledged to meet the challenges we faced with honesty and transparency - understanding that whatever we face we have to face it together.

I was clear - we have to get serious about our challenges:

- A homelessness crisis that grew over 20% the year before I took office;
- Reduction in confidence in our ability to keep our neighborhoods safe;
- Children and vulnerable families suffering from the impacts of cuts to core services;

- Pockets of economic inequality; and
- A fracture in our relationship with Tribal Nations that would have always held us back from being the city we know we could be.

I mention these issues not for shock value or doom and gloom - but because I believe that challenges, no matter how big, are not roadblocks - they are rallying points.

And Tulsa, it's time to rally together!

Sales Tax Acknowledgment

I think it's important to talk about where we are. Just recently, I proposed a tax increase to the City Council, which was seven-tenths of a cent, that would allow us to invest in things I felt were critical to our city's future. I know these are hard conversations to have, but I asked on the strength of our relationship and the work we've done together to get it put on for an up or down vote.

Tonight, the Council chose to table that for conversation in January, and I mention that because it means that the conversation continues about the future of our city. It was my goal to make sure that we could include that in this year's budget, but I recognize that running a big city means there is a lot of opinions. And I do believe that as we go through tonight, that as we move toward the future, it is critically important that every Tulsan makes their voice heard.

So, let's talk about it.

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Homelessness

There is no midsize or larger city in America that isn't dealing with homelessness.

And Tulsa is no different - just like everywhere else - we've all seen it. On our streets, in our parks, and outside of businesses. We've seen the human cost in the faces of people who have nowhere to go.

But what sets us apart is our willingness to end it - there are naysayers that say we can't or that we shouldn't - both are wrong.

To the question of can we do it:

This year, we witnessed an 18% reduction in the growth of homelessness according to our point in time count - a testament to the ongoing work across our city.

But a reduction in growth is not our ultimate goal - our goal is ending homelessness as we know it - making it rare, brief and non-recurring.

This is no small task - it is complex.

Earlier this year, when the State moved to clear people from their property - without offering alternatives or coordination with the City or our service providers - the problem compounded leading to an uptick in emergency room visits, homeless individuals showing up more prominently in neighborhoods.

As frustrated as we were by the inhumanity and chaos - Tulsa didn't respond with anger or fear. We responded with compassion, determination and a commitment to strategies that don't just make us feel good for a moment or provide good content for a news cycle - but ones that work.

Months before the State's actions, we had already been working behind the scenes to launch a new approach - one that would clean up encampments, yes - but also treat people with dignity and provide them with real paths to stability - an approach to clean Tulsa's streets up for good.

That effort is Safe Move Tulsa.

Safe Move Tulsa isn't about shifting the problem or simply moving people from one street corner to another or the false hope they'll move to another state and become someone else's problem.

It's about moving people from the streets to stability. It's about connecting our neighbors with housing, services, and the dignity that comes from having a place to call home.

It's about accountability and making sure our city is safe - since December 2nd, we've made a shift - we are no longer just talking about homelessness at City Hall or looking for someone else to solve it for us - we are building the system that will end it.

And I'm proud to say that just one week ago, with the help of so many dedicated outreach workers, service providers, and City staff - we closed our first large encampment under this new strategy, the right way.

All in all, 25 individuals - some of whom had been living in encampments for nearly a decade, **a decade** - now have a roof over their head with access to care, and a chance to rebuild.

What's more, the encampment is not coming back. Our teams are out there every day checking the site, and making sure people know this isn't a place to return - and 61 tons of debris later - it's a place we've reclaimed and returned to its intended purpose.

Less than 45 days after I took office, Tulsa faced life threatening frigid temperatures.

In less than 30 hours, we scrambled to save lives by standing up emergency shelters that provided a safe place to sleep for 1,400 folks needing protection from the cold.

I visited these shelters - I looked directly into the eyes of those lives that were saved and made a commitment that this winter, the city would be proactive and ready by standing up a winter shelter by November 2025.

We made a commitment and I'm happy to report that - thanks to a partnership with CREOKS and the BeHeard Movement - the new shelter will open Monday and run through March - ensuring that the promises we make are the promises we keep.

This shelter will be a place that offers warmth, safety, meals, and connections to the services that help people rebuild their lives.

And on the horizon is our next big step.

Just a few weeks ago, we reached an agreement with the County to purchase the former Juvenile Detention Center and transform it into Tulsa's first true low-barrier shelter.

This facility will give people a safe place to sleep without the impossible restrictions that too often keep them on the streets. It will connect them directly to case managers, healthcare providers, and pathways to permanent housing, and give their pet a place to stay too.

I want to thank Commissioner Lonnie Sims, Commissioner Stan Saltee, Commissioner Dunkerley, and other Tulsa County Commissioners. It took us some time to get there, but there was never a question that Tulsa County and the City of Tulsa cared deeply about the folks who are struggling and I'm proud to have worked with everyone to make it happen.

In the coming months we will be working with the community around the site to ease any neighborhood concerns - we will ensure the community around the site is safe while laying the foundation for something lasting - the foundation for ending street sleeping and excessive loitering in our public spaces.

So yes, we can do it - we now have the roadmap and best practice on how to decommission the right way - and now we need to scale it - no excuses, it's time to deliver.

Delivering means we have to be courageous - that means doing things a bit differently than before.

It is my hope that Tulsans will have the chance to decide. The proposal in front of council that would invest nearly \$30 million in our effort to end homelessness.

This plan scales up the strategies that have already proven to be successful and is critical cleaning up Tulsa streets for good.

To the question of if we should.

“The King will reply,” scripture says, “Truly I tell you whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did to me.”

Yes, **we should do** these things because we are a city of faith, a place that doesn’t just want people to just simply survive the elements, but come out stronger on the other side.

Our work with local service providers, faith communities, and volunteers is our testimony - as we **are all** called to care for the least of us.

When I look back at the last 11 months, I think about the people who work every day on this issue. Those who have not had the luxury of Monday morning quarterbacking. People who have faced endless criticism and who have had their intentions and commitment to our city questioned - I think about my Senior Advisor for Homelessness - Emily Hall and our A Way Home for Tulsa agencies - they have all stood tall and when attacked they stayed focused - and because they have Tulsa is well on its way to becoming a national model.

Ending homelessness is a tall task, and it takes a community to get it done - I’m so proud of our city and these leaders - we aren’t just talking the talk in Tulsa, we are walking the walk.

Increasing Affordable Housing

The work ahead means focusing on evidence-based strategies - letting the data guide the work.

Our local data is clear - lack of affordable housing is the primary cause of homelessness and 46% of Tulsans are considered cost burden by housing costs.

Put differently, access to affording housing is a driver of homelessness and a threat to our economic progress overall.

When it comes to housing - we not only want dignity for our neighbors experiencing homelessness, we also want Tulsa to be a city where a teacher can easily own a home, where a civil servant can comfortably afford to live in the community they serve, and where a college graduate doesn’t feel like they need to leave town just to afford rent.

Housing is the backbone of stability – and without it, families struggle to hold down jobs, children struggle to succeed in school, and neighborhoods struggle to thrive.

This administration is committed to getting 6,000 additional affordable units online by 2028 - and the clock is ticking.

To make this possible, we're tackling everything from speeding up our permitting processes, analyzing our zoning codes and working with property owners to ensure compliance with City ordinances.

As we work to further streamline permitting reviews, we're also improving coordination across departments making it easier for builders and developers to move their projects through the walls of City Hall.

Earlier this year, we partnered with Housing Forward, a local non-profit focused on housing policy, advocacy and data - to review our permitting processes. Based on the feedback we've already gotten, reforms are already underway.

But we're not stopping there.

Earlier this fall, we launched what we're calling the Community Builder Pilot Program – a partnership between the City and Tulsa's development community to help affordable housing projects move through the development process faster. The program helps builders address code violations more quickly and efficiently and gives them a single point of contact in the City to help streamline permitting.

And soon, the program will offer incentives to those developers to assist with permitting costs and other processes to speed up responsible development even more.

But we're not stopping there, either.

We are in the final development stages of our pre-approved housing plans program - also known as the T-Town Home Catalog. These ready-to-go designs will help builders bring new homes to market faster – so fast, in fact, that if we're not careful, some of them might get their permits before their lumber is even delivered.

But we're not stopping there, either.

We've also formed a Housing Acceleration Team at City Hall – a dedicated group focused on fast-tracking large-scale housing projects.

Their first major success was with the Tulsa Housing Authority's Hilltop Apartments project, which will bring over 100 affordable housing units into the market.

This project serves as proof that collaboration accelerates results.

In the coming weeks, I will ask the council to provide the city with additional tools to rid our neighborhoods of non-owner occupied blighted properties as part of our effort to reduce blight by 60% over the next three years.

I thank the Oklahoma Legislature for the passage of House Bill 2147, which required a veto override - it will allow us the ability to take eye sores and turn them into nice, affordable properties leading to the kind of neighborhood revitalization Tulsans deserve - without over gentrifying them.

All of these things are being done with the goal to get more housing, at all levels, online, as quickly as possible.

But it's one thing for me to say all these great things, and it's another for you to see it.

Earlier this year, we launched a new Housing Tracker Map, an online tool that shows exactly where new housing is being planned, permitted, and built.

This isn't just data – it's transparency and accountability.

None of this work happens without intentionality. Our Senior Advisor for Housing, Gene Bulmash, has been instrumental in coordinating City resources, building partnerships, and keeping our focus on results.

Gene's leadership, in addition to the entire team in Development Services, Planning and Neighborhoods, Water & Sewer and Public Works, is ensuring that whether it's a major apartment complex or a single-family project, every unit counts.

This is just the beginning. We'll continue to expand the programs that work, strengthen our partnerships with community organizations and our development community, and ensure that no Tulsa neighborhood is left behind.

Because every Tulsan deserves a safe, affordable place to call home – and we're building that future, one home at a time.

Making Tulsa the Safest Big City in the Country

Just over one year ago, when I was elected - I vowed to make Tulsa the safest big city in the country. Because without safe streets, families can't thrive - and without safe neighborhoods, businesses won't invest.

To achieve that vision, I appointed Laurel Roberts to serve as my Public Safety Commissioner - to lead this work.

A 29-year veteran of the Tulsa Police Department, Commissioner Roberts is helping us coordinate across departments and agencies like never before, ensuring that our approach to safety is not just reactive, but strategic and forward-looking.

And that approach is already delivering results.

This year, we graduated two classes of new police officers, with another academy currently underway that's seeing some of the strongest enrollment numbers in recent memory.

We've also graduated a new Tulsa Fire Department class, with an academy class running right now with 25 cadets who will graduate in March - putting us closer to our goal of staffing fire trucks with a desired 4 firefighters per truck. All-in-all, our Fire Department is very close to being fully staffed.

And - for the first time in a long time, our 911 Center is fully staffed and we've begun implementing advanced technologies - creating new ways to enhance our system to reach you faster with instant location, picture and video texting and language access.

All of this culminates in a reduction in crime and the preservation of property.

Although the Tulsa Police Department remains significantly under-staffed, crime in Tulsa is down this year at all levels.

That's not just a statistic - it's the result of tireless work by our police officers, our prosecutors, our community leaders, and our residents. But we also know that safety isn't just about numbers - it's about how people feel.

And some of this year's headlines reminded us that our work to guarantee safety is far from done as we saw crimes in our parks and witnessed violence Downtown.

We wanted to put an end to the senseless violence - so we put our heads together and we listened to the community.

- The City Council passed and I signed and successfully implemented a new downtown youth curfew ordinance, which allowed us to control crowd sizes and only issue 12 curfew citations.
- We invested in new security measures in our parks, and;
- We reaffirmed our commitment to public safety citywide, launching Operation Ceasefire, which ended with 88 felony arrests, removed 157 illegal guns off the streets, and included 4,127 citizen contacts with seven uses of force and one complaint. We didn't just prove we can reduce crime by getting dangerous people off the streets - we proved we can protect both our citizens and their civil liberties at the same time.

But policing alone cannot prevent violence. Real safety is built through relationships and trust - and that's why this year, the City of Tulsa and our partners officially launched the Tulsa Community Violence Intervention Initiative.

More than 250 residents have already come together and will be helping shape Tulsa's first-ever Violence Reduction Strategic Plan - and soon, full-time Credible Messengers and Outreach Workers will begin working through the Terence Crutcher Foundation and Youth Services of Tulsa, bringing support directly into neighborhoods where intervention can make the biggest difference.

All of this work is backed with data - and a new crime data analyst will help us use real-time information to identify where interventions are needed most - ensuring our efforts are not just heartfelt, but effective.

For years, there has been a debate between community programs and enforcement as a way to ensure public safety - and the truth is you need both working hand and hand.

That's why in Tulsa, mental health calls are no longer solely the responsibility of our police officers or our firefighters.

Today, our first responders are supported by a network of specialized mental health teams - because true public safety doesn't just mean responding, it means responding appropriately to the need of the individual on the other end of the phone -

Our partnership between 911 and COPES continues to expand. Through this collaboration, mental health clinicians are dispatched directly to calls where someone is in crisis - freeing our officers to focus on crime while getting people the specialized help they need. In just a few months, over 4,000 calls have been diverted from first responders and into the hands of trained mental health clinicians.

We've also deepened our partnership between the Tulsa Fire Department and Family & Children's Services through our Alternative Response Teams. These teams pair firefighters with mental health professionals to respond directly to behavioral health calls - meeting people where they are, with compassion and care. Over the last year, we expanded operations in Downtown to seven days a week, where the program is having a major impact on mental health calls and connecting those experiencing homelessness with long-term resources.

This is all part of a citywide alternative response strategy - one that includes not only COPES and the Alternative Response Teams, but also teams like the Community Response Team, which pairs a police officer with a mental health clinician, and the Opioid Response Team, which helps connect people struggling with addiction to treatment.

We know adults are not the only Tulsans struggling - that's why we're also investing in our youngest Tulsans through the Children's Mental Health Initiative. This program will screen

and assess more than 450 children with mental health needs, connecting them to the services and support they need to thrive.

In the coming year, it is my intent to take the next step in community engagement with a Community Task Force focused on giving ongoing input, advice and guidance on our overall Alternative Response Strategy.

All of this work is in service of ensuring our neighborhoods are safe.

Of the issues impacting neighborhoods - stray and loose animals continues to rise to the top of the list - meaning Tulsa Animal Services is more than just a shelter - it's a vehicle for safer neighborhoods.

Each year, the Animal Shelter takes in 8,500 animals and under the leadership of Director Sherri Carrier, our animal shelter also achieved its highest save rate in decades - nearly 80% balancing the needs of the neighborhoods and the humane treatment of animals in our community.

At the end of the day, long-term safety means empowering residents to drive change block by block - and our Planning and Neighborhoods Department is doing more than ever to empower neighborhood leaders to take action to make their communities stronger and safer.

One key initiative is the Neighborhood Academy, which trains local leaders to work effectively with the city, strengthen their neighborhoods, and foster community pride.

Together, these programs reflect a comprehensive vision of public safety: one that is strategic, compassionate, and focused on creating stronger, safer, and healthier communities across Tulsa, all in service of building a great city for the next generation.

With the support of the council, the proposal tabled earlier this evening by the Tulsa City Council would have given Tulsans the chance to make historic investments.

My plan to win the next decade would invest nearly \$22 million directly into public safety:

- Invest \$15 million in increased pay for every law enforcement officer and firefighter, placing them above the pay rates of sworn officers in comparable cities - putting Tulsa on a pathway to fully staff both departments;
- Set aside \$1.5 million for Downtown safety;
- Fund the community violence intervention programs, protecting them from federal cuts; and

- Invest \$1,100,000 in Tulsa Animal Services and \$1,600,000 into our municipal courts.

Investing in those who protect us every day is critical in Tulsa and it's time we get it done without delay.

Which brings us to the next chapter in our city's work - improving the lives of our young people.

Improving the Lives of Children, Youth, and Families

Oklahoma is 46th in nation in child well-being.

While we can't change the entire state, we can come together to put Tulsa children on a different path.

A good friend once told me that the best marker of how a community is doing as a whole is how it treats its young people and families.

I never forgot it - it's why we created the Office of Children, Youth, and Families - the first of its kind in Tulsa. Because we shouldn't leave our children's future to chance, but we must fully commit to and invest in them.

This office is dedicated to ensuring that every child has a chance to thrive - and it has an ambitious mission: to ensure that an additional 15,000 Tulsa children and youth are on a path to economic mobility and thriving by 2030. The office is staffed by ImpactTulsa and is overseen by Deputy Mayor Krystal Reyes.

The importance of having an office focused on children, youth and families has been especially critical in recent weeks when disruptions to SNAP benefits threatened the well-being of families.

Our Deputy Mayor, working with the Mayor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families, quickly convened partners across the city, and aligned efforts - including activating nearly 40 public sites across the city to host food drives. This is in addition to our Water and Sewer Department and our Water and Utilities Board providing more relief to families living in our city impacted by federal furloughs and SNAP benefits suspension through a moratorium on water shutoffs until January 31.

In the midst of these challenging times for our most vulnerable families we continue to do the work needed to find solutions in partnership with those working every day to make a brighter Tulsa for every child from cradle to career.

Because when Tulsa invests in its children, we are investing in ourselves.

It is far past time local government directly invests in young people - not long after I was elected, the East Central High School Girls Flag Football team came to the Mayor's Office for lunch to celebrate their championship.

During our lunch I asked them what I could do as mayor to make Tulsa a better place for them.

Their answer was simple, we need safe places to go that don't cost a bunch of money and we want good job opportunities.

Although Gavin might disagree, I am big believer that when the youth speak - we should listen and move to act.

It is a goal of this administration to create new career pathways and afterschool opportunities for Tulsa children.

With the support of what the Council tabled earlier this evening, we could have:

- Given 1,200 youth a job opportunity and created 22,000 afterschool slots for children across our community every year.

"The best marker of how a community is doing as a whole is how it treats its young people and families."

This work is about building leaders, entrepreneurs, teachers, artists, and neighbors who will carry this city forward for generations to come.

Economic Opportunity for All

Our work with children is rooted in a belief in economic opportunity for all.

Erran Persley - our Director of Economic Development - said it best:

"Our job," he said. "is not just to attract the next generation of businesses and employers to our city - our job is to make sure that every Tulsan can benefit from those opportunities when they arrive."

And this is so true. It's not enough to just grow the economy; we must grow it inclusively. Every new investment, every new company, and every new job should open doors for Tulsans in every neighborhood - north, south, east, and west - because true progress means shared prosperity.

I'm proud to stand behind that commitment - the kind of commitment that yields massive investment in our city. This past year, the City has worked hard to formally establish two new Tax Increment Finance Districts, with a third currently in development. These new TIFs

are paving the way for hundreds of millions of dollars in investment, bringing with them more than 1,500 much-needed housing units and revitalized spaces for businesses to grow.

All total, as I stand here tonight, a number of projects are underway or in the pipeline totaling over \$1.7 billion in capital investment, opening new opportunities all across our community.

As we plan for the new, we can never forget that in nearly every state, existing businesses represent over 60% of new investments annually, and few states or cities offer programs proportional to the investments made by existing businesses.

A major challenge to most of these businesses is access to capital. The ability to provide low interest loans for existing businesses would be a game changer for Tulsa.

Our existing companies are our backbone and supporting them is critical to our economic future. Tonight's tabled proposal included a \$7.5 million business retention fund and begin the work of diversifying our economic development incentive portfolio focused on incentives that create the greatest return on investment for the Tulsa taxpayer.

As people come from around the world to celebrate the Route 66 Centennial or fly in from any number of the new direct fly destinations, I hope they see it as a city that is investing in itself - a city growing in its global competitiveness.

From growing small businesses to becoming an international city - I want them to see a city building an economy that works for everyone.

Strengthening Partnership with Tribal Nations

This brings me to the broader partnerships we are building in Tulsa.

We are a city built on land that is and always has been that of tribal nations. And rather than downplaying that reality, this year we took an important step forward together.

This all started when Amanda Swope - our Director of Tribal Policy and Partnerships - joined the City to help create a bright path forward.

Amanda's impact materialized earlier this summer when we finalized a new agreement with the Muscogee Nation that allows for better coordination on municipal court cases. It allows our officers to continue to do their jobs while ensuring municipal cases are heard in the most appropriate court of jurisdiction.

This is about more than bureaucracy. It's about respect. It's about acknowledging sovereignty while also providing clarity and fairness - and perhaps most importantly, it's about a better approach to public safety.

Tulsa is becoming a model of what strong tribal partnerships look like. Because the future of Tulsa depends on our ability to work hand in hand with our tribal neighbors - whether it's in justice, in economic development, in culture, or in community building.

Tulsa Revenue

As you can see, over the last 11 months, we've been hard at work.

We are meeting our obligations, and we are working hard to deliver results - but as I stand here tonight, I can tell you there are challenges that threaten our City's future progress and growth.

Earlier this summer, our auditor confirmed what we found in February, which was that if we continue to budget the way we always have, we choose the path of economic uncertainty that is unsustainable in the long run.

This is a practice we intend to end on a pathway toward fiscal responsibility and budget stability - giving both City employees and citizens the assurances you deserve as we work together to move Tulsa forward.

Let me be clear - this is not about ONE bad budget year, a ONE bad cycle, or even mismanagement in years past - this is a structural challenge that must be addressed. Other cities have addressed this issue and it's time Tulsa does the same.

Today, we're lower than Bixby, Owasso, Claremore, Sand Springs - even Oklahoma City.

In fact, had Tulsa raised its sales tax equal to Oklahoma City when Oklahoma City did in 2018, Tulsa would have invested an additional \$420,000,000 in itself.

For less than a penny, Tulsa's sales tax rate would reach a competitive level of 4.35% and generate the resources necessary to:

- Help end street homelessness through best practices and create housing opportunities at all income levels;
- Take care of the people that protect us in our police and fire departments; properly invest in downtown safety, and expand community violence prevention citywide;
- Invest in after-school programs, summer learning, and youth workforce opportunities, giving 15,000 more Tulsa children the chance to thrive; and

- We can make Tulsa an even better place to grow and start a business by providing access to capital and low interest loans to boost our local economy.

I've heard from Tulsans across the city, met with you one on one, attended neighborhood meetings, and held over 10 Community Conversations this year - listening to your concerns. You get it, this is about more than investing in local government - it's about investing in a brighter future. It's time you get the opportunity to be a part of the conversation – and even if some disagree, you deserve to be a part of the solution. You deserve to vote.

As a candidate, I said “hold me accountable.”

As mayor, I've done the things I promised to do and tonight I've shared the progress that has been made.

Now I say, it's time to invest and go win the next decade. I will always be a mayor who will be honest with you, I won't be afraid to engage with anyone.

You hired me to be a steward of our city - and as your #1 employee, I'm saying, “yes - continue to hold me accountable,” and it's time to take the next step as this generation of Tulsans.

I am ready, I think our citizens are ready - but elected officials have to hear from you.

Long before I became mayor, I became a dad.

And 17 years later, I am the dad of a high school senior.

A young man with his whole life ahead of him and it is my hope that Gavin and young Tulsans like him feel like Tulsa is a place where they **want** to stay - because all the opportunity in the world exist right here - where families want to plant roots, where neighborhoods are strong - and where every kid has a real shot.

This is the mark of a great city - and great cities don't become great by accident.

They become great because people choose to invest in them, because they decide that progress is something worth building - not something to sit by and passively hope for.

Closing

So what is the state of our city?

We are facing homelessness - but we are meeting it with compassion and bold action.

We are facing public safety challenges - but we are finding ways to do it with courage and innovation.

We face hurdles with our youth - but we are creating new supports and new opportunities.

We face complexity with tribal governance - but we are embracing it with partnership and respect.

We face the trauma of a massacre - but we are providing closure to families and a Road to Repair

And we face economic headwinds - but we are answering them with investment and growth.

Tulsa's story is not one of avoiding challenges. It is one of rising to them.

We are not running away from accountability; we are running toward it.

We are not waiting for someone else to solve our problems for us; we are stepping up.

We are choosing progress.

And at a moment of deep divisions nationally, we are choosing each other - white, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native, Freedman, young and old - we choose each other.

And as we look ahead, I see a city that is safer, stronger, more compassionate, and more united than ever before.

Let us be the generation that didn't just wait and wish for better days - let us be the generation that got to work and made them happen.

We have work to do - but I know we can do it together.

It's an honor of a lifetime to serve as Mayor of the city.

Thank you, God bless you and may God bless every corner of our great city.