



NEWS RELEASE

Contact – Michael Padella, City Administrator
(636) 498-6565 ext. 2
Michael.padella@cityofcottleville.com

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Mayor Thompson Delivers First Annual State of the City Address

COTTLEVILLE, MO – Mayor Stephen Thompson delivered the City of Cottleville’s first annual State of the City Address on June 17, highlighting the City’s accomplishments over the past year and outlining priorities for the future.

Speaking before residents, elected officials, staff, business owners, and community partners, Mayor Thompson reflected on a year marked by continued investment in public safety, parks and recreation, infrastructure improvements, long-range planning, and responsible fiscal management.

“Cottleville has always been a special place,” Mayor Thompson stated. “While our community continues to grow and evolve, we remain grounded in the values that helped shape this city — strong neighborhoods, community involvement, public safety, quality parks and trails, local businesses, and a commitment to preserving the character that makes Cottleville unique.”

The address highlighted several significant accomplishments, including continued recognition as Missouri’s safest city, implementation of a new regional Real Time Information Center partnership, completion of the Vantage Lake shoreline stabilization project, re-establishment of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PARC), and ongoing development of the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor Thompson also outlined several initiatives currently underway, including pedestrian safety improvements funded through a Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant, planning for a future kayak landing at Legacy Park, continued infrastructure investments, and efforts to support local businesses while preserving the character of the community.

The Mayor concluded by thanking City staff, volunteers, residents, business owners, and community partners whose contributions continue to shape Cottleville’s success.

A complete copy of the 2026 State of the City Address is available on the City’s website.

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— MAYOR STEPHEN THOMPSON —

Good evening everyone,

Members of the Board of Aldermen, City staff, committee and commission members, residents, business owners, community partners, and guests — thank you for being here tonight.

This evening marks an important milestone for the City of Cottleville as we present what I hope will become our first annual State of the City address.

Earlier this spring marked one year since I had the honor of being sworn in as Mayor of the City of Cottleville. Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to work alongside an outstanding Board of Aldermen, dedicated city staff, engaged residents, and countless volunteers who all share a common goal — continuing to make Cottleville one of the best communities in Missouri to live, work, raise a family, and operate a business.

Cottleville has always been a special place. While our community continues to grow and evolve, we remain grounded in the values that helped shape this city — strong neighborhoods, community involvement, public safety, quality parks and trails, local businesses, and a commitment to preserving the character that makes Cottleville unique.

Over the past year, we have focused on responsible governance, long-term planning, and continued investment in the services and amenities our residents value.

I am proud to report that the City of Cottleville remains in a strong financial position. Despite the economic pressures and rising costs that communities across the country continue to face, the City has maintained healthy reserves, stable revenues, and a balanced financial outlook.



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Our FY 2026 budget reflects those priorities. Investments continue to support roadway maintenance, stormwater infrastructure, trail systems, parks and recreation amenities, and public safety operations, while positioning the City to responsibly plan for future growth and community needs.

At the same time, we have continued working to improve communication and accessibility between City Hall and the community. Over the past year, the City has expanded efforts to modernize resident communication tools, streamline website features, and improve transparency. We recently introduced a new page to the city website featuring blog posts from your elected officials. This provides elected officials with another platform to communicate directly with residents.

Efforts are also underway to improve digital ADA accessibility and further modernize our website and online communication systems so residents can more easily access information and services regardless of physical ability.

Public safety continues to remain one of the City's highest priorities.

Over the past year, the Cottleville Police Department has continued investing in recruitment, retention, training, and community policing efforts. So far in 2026 the City has welcomed four (4) new officers. The City continues to support employment strategies that will attract and retain high-quality law enforcement professionals.

We also continued strengthening regional partnerships and coordination efforts with neighboring agencies and emergency response partners, including 911 Emergency Dispatch and Real Time Information Center (RTIC) services with the City of O'Fallon. The RTIC partnership agreement was approved last month and went into effect on June 1st.

The Police Department continues to invest in technology upgrades, proactive policing strategies, and community engagement efforts that help maintain the strong relationship between our officers and the community they serve. In fact, we will be considering another partnership this evening with O'Fallon to utilize and support the Drones as First Responders program or DFR.



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In addition, the visibility and success of programs such as K-9 operations, including Officer Pat Dolan and K-9 Zeke, continue to demonstrate professionalism and commitment to helping keep our community and the surrounding region safe.

Because of these collective efforts, Cottleville continues to be recognized as the safest community in Missouri for five (5) consecutive years starting in 2022.

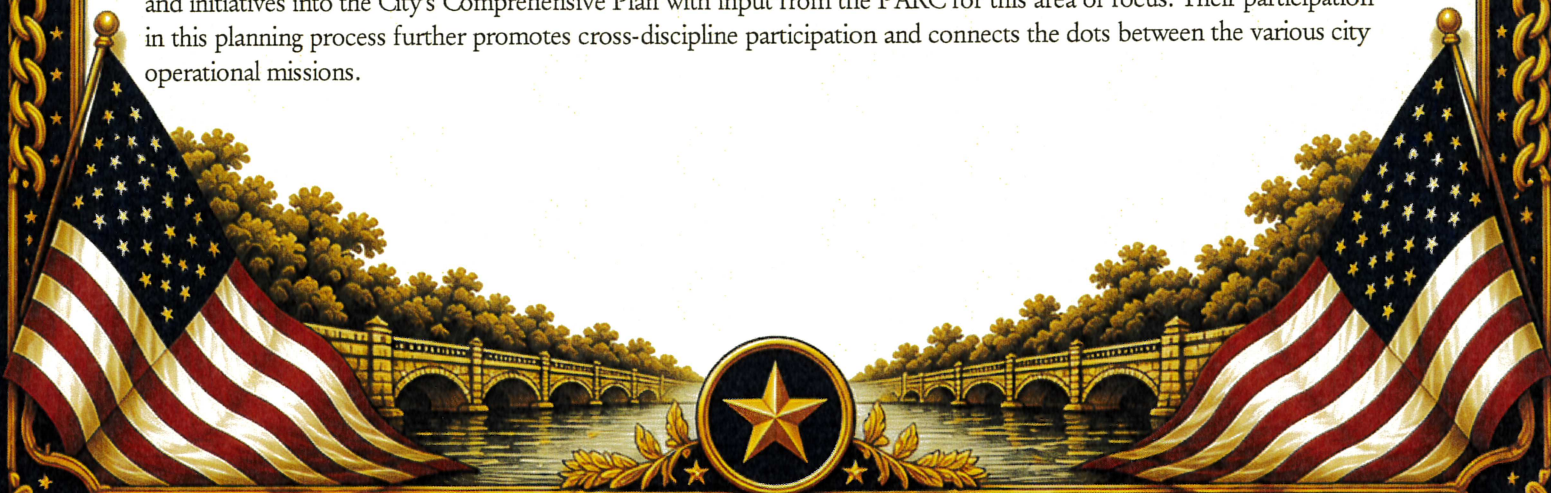
I would like to personally thank Chief McCune and every member of the Cottleville Police Department for their professionalism, dedication, and service to our community.

Another defining strength of Cottleville continues to be our parks, trails, and recreational amenities. I am very proud that, through the advocacy and leadership of the elected officials, we were able to reinstitute the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, or PARC, with renewed energy and purpose.

While many park initiatives were already underway, the PARC group has been busy evaluating the city's robust parks and public lands system (consisting of nearly 200 acres of land) and associated amenities while helping develop new goals, priorities, and long-term planning initiatives that better connect these various elements.

One major accomplishment this year was the completion of the Vantage Lake shoreline stabilization project, which addressed severe erosion that had occurred over decades. The project also included the beginning stages of restoring natural and native plantings intended to reduce future erosion, improve water quality, and encourage a more diverse ecosystem around the lake.

Trail connectivity and pedestrian safety also remain major priorities for the City as we update and incorporate new goals and initiatives into the City's Comprehensive Plan with input from the PARC for this area of focus. Their participation in this planning process further promotes cross-discipline participation and connects the dots between the various city operational missions.



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And speaking of the Comprehensive Plan, this is a vital strategic planning document for the City. Towards the end of last year, the City partnered with PGAV Planners to facilitate this important long-range planning effort. Through community outreach, the City has received valuable input and feedback. To date, the City has received over 700 completed resident surveys, conducted small group stakeholder interviews, and held two open house meetings for the community with one more planned for August.

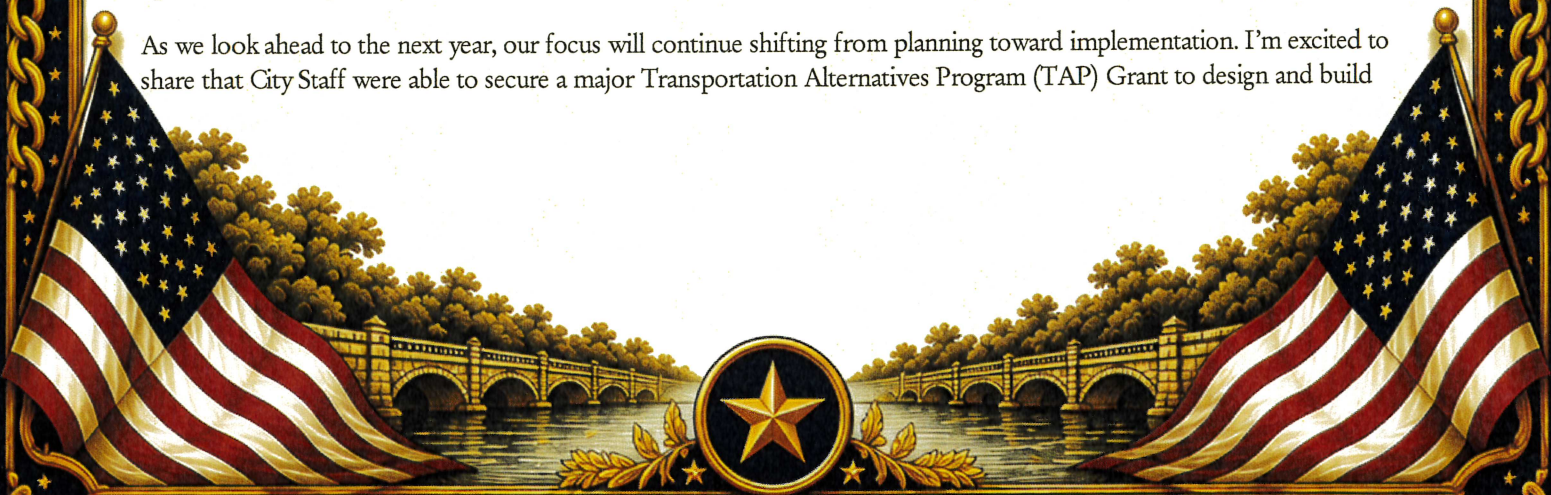
This process is more than simply planning for development. It is about identifying how we preserve the character of Cottleville while responsibly preparing for the future.

The recently completed transportation corridor and traffic analysis report also provided valuable insight into future roadways and traffic considerations throughout the community. This traffic study and analysis will become a major pillar of the Comp Plan's short- and long-range transportation improvement strategies.

The City continues to see strong community investment and business activity. Old Town remains a vibrant destination for residents and visitors alike. While Cottleville has experienced tremendous population growth as a percentage, we are still considered relatively small compared to other cities in the region. However, our reputation as a vibrant and dynamic community with an incredible variety of events has positioned the Cottleville community to "hit well above our weight class!" During my travels and attendance at city government networking events, it is not uncommon for me to meet mayors, businesspeople, and most often regular citizens who have either heard about Cottleville or have been to one of the many unique businesses that call Cottleville home.

As the community continues to evolve, City operations and policies must continue evolving with it. Some examples of recent policy modernization efforts include revisions to procedures involving large-scale grading operations and escrows, updates to the City's noise and nuisance codes, and reductions to the late fee associated with solid waste services.

As we look ahead to the next year, our focus will continue shifting from planning toward implementation. I'm excited to share that City Staff were able to secure a major Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant to design and build



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pedestrian safety improvements and traffic calming initiatives through Old Town and beyond. We are also actively pursuing the engineering and design of a new Kayak Landing site in Legacy Park as a future amenity.

We will continue investing in roadway maintenance, stormwater infrastructure, parks, trails, pedestrian safety, and recreational opportunities.

Economic development efforts will continue focusing on supporting local businesses, attracting thoughtful and complementary investment, and expanding recreational and destination-oriented opportunities that complement the character of our community and help bring new people to visit, play, shop, and dine in Cottleville.

The City will also continue evaluating long-term facility needs, including future Parks and Public Works operational space needs.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who contributes to the continued success of the City of Cottleville. If I itemized and listed each individual or even group, we would be here for another 10 minutes, so I will just say thank you to all the city employees, citizens who volunteer and serve on a standing city committee, business owners who are passionate and have chosen to invest in Cottleville and likewise, residents who have been here for 30 years or 30 days.

The strength of this community is not defined by any one individual or elected office. It is the result of residents, businesses, volunteers, city staff, community organizations, and elected officials all working together to make Cottleville a wonderful place to be.

While there is always more work ahead, I firmly believe Cottleville is exceptionally well-positioned for the future, thanks in no small part to your continued trust, support, and involvement in our community.

May God continue to bless the City of Cottleville and all those who call it home.



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