



**City of Russellville
Office of Mayor Richard Harris**

To the Citizens of Russellville,

At this time, I feel it is appropriate to apprise you that I will not be seeking a second term as the Mayor of Russellville.

Serving as your Mayor for the last three years has been an honor and a privilege, and you can be certain that I will continue to serve to the best of my ability throughout the remainder of my term in office.

I have no definitive plans once my term in office has expired and will be considering my options as the year progresses. I know that I will miss serving the city that I care so much about, but one must be able to recognize when it is time to move on to other challenges, and I believe that time has come for me.

As your Mayor, I have always tried to approach my role as a job rather than a political position. My background in engineering and operations helped me focus on process improvements within city government, implementing better departmental structure, and prioritizing city resources. I have also learned, from you, that flexibility is essential in meeting the emergent needs of our citizens. My priority may not have always been your priority but by monitoring your input and adjusting resources and direction, I have tried to best meet your needs.

Over the last three years, we have worked hard to improve city services and the quality of life for our citizens. The list below notes some of the more significant accomplishments that the city has made in the last three years.

- Hiring critical positions within the city to improve the quality of products we provide to our citizens
- Improving processes for prioritizing work, scheduling projects, providing oversight of design and build, and forecasting future development within our city
- Designing and completing several significant drainage projects
- Increasing road maintenance and sidewalk repair as well as allocating more dollars to facilitate continued improvement
- Designing and building the first phase of the Schoolhouse Multi-use Trail
- Installing WIFI at all City Parks
- Reorganizing and prioritization within the Parks and Recreation Department to facilitate improvements in the maintenance of our city parks
- Implementing improvements to our sports complexes and the addition of a new Dog Park for our community
- Holding the first ever Ward by Ward Summits to get feedback from citizens' in order to meet your needs and concerns
- Partnering with Entergy to utilize solar power for our public buildings, saving taxpayer dollars
- Working with the Russellville Chamber of Commerce and the Russellville Regional Economic Development Alliance to facilitate a Workforce Development Committee in partnership with ATU, as well as the development of an Economic Development Study for Russellville
- Increasing focus on the Russellville Police Department by facilitating the use of Canines, implementing drones for use by RPD and RFD, and increasing salaries for our police officers

- Managing the city's budget, resulting in more surplus funds than ever experienced in Russellville and increasing the amount of emergency funds available in the case of a natural disaster in our community
- Working with industry as they plan the expansion of their facilities and business in Russellville and facilitating the sale of the Dalton King Building to a local startup company, Phoenix Innovations

During my time as Mayor we have been presented with a global pandemic as well as several other significant and dynamic situations that diverted attention from focusing on the city's growth. I am pleased that we addressed each issue as it arose and even with these disruptions we have been able to move the city forward in ways that will greatly strengthen our future growth. The 2020 Census tells us that in a state full of counties and cities that are losing population, Russellville's population is growing, industry is thriving, and we are poised to be even better in the next decade.

In 2022, using the economic development study developed last year by the Russellville Regional Economic Development Alliance, we will develop a foundation for regional economic and workforce development growth that will carry on well past my tenure in office. The programs that will be created through these plans will create increased business and job opportunities within and around our city.

While economic development is important, the city's continued focus on hosting community events such as the Hot Air Balloon Festival, Holiday Glow and the Arkansas River Valley Bike Festival have helped to increase community pride and quality of life for all the citizens of Russellville. There are so many people who have contributed to our successes in these areas, but I would especially like to thank Christie Graham, Paul Harvel, and Danielle Housenick for their efforts.

It has been my objective to leave the city in a better position when my term expires than it was when I took office. This should be the goal of any administration and I believe that I have been successful in meeting this objective. We will continue this progress during my last year in office.

Finally, during my term in office, I have been committed to standing firm on a promise that I made to voters during my campaign. I ran for the office of Mayor on the platform that I would not support a casino in our community without the voters' endorsement and I have honored that commitment. It has always been important to me to maintain my integrity by keeping my word. "Always do what you say you're going to do," is a maxim in which I try to adhere.

Thank you for allowing me to be your Mayor and let's continue to improve Russellville throughout 2022!