

#### 2019 ORO VALLEY STATE OF THE TOWN ADDRESS

## Mayor Joseph C. Winfield

with special guests J.J. Johnston, Kristy Diaz-Trahan and Chief Daniel G. Sharp

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of my colleagues on the Oro Valley Town Council and Town staff, welcome to the 18<sup>th</sup> annual State of the Town Address.

It is an honor to be here with you today, and I am excited to talk to you about our community, and our Strategic Leadership Plan. First, I would like to acknowledge my fellow Councilmembers. Not everyone could be here today, but please join me in recognizing them: Vice Mayor Melanie Barrett and Councilmembers Joyce Jones-Ivey, Josh Nicolson, Rhonda Piña, Bill Rodman and Steve Solomon.

I would also like to thank U of A President Dr. Robbins for participating with us today and his insightful remarks. The Town of Oro Valley is grateful for your leadership, support and energy, just as we are grateful for our partnership with the U of A, and the commitment that the university has made in Oro Valley. This is truly an exciting time. Thank you, Dr. Robbins.

To the Greater Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce board of directors, President and CEO Dave Perry, and each of the sponsors who made today's event possible, I offer my sincere thanks. I know the Chamber had some staff transitions this summer, and I think those adjustments have been made seamlessly as evidenced by this tremendous crowd and outstanding event. Thanks to all of you for your support and ongoing partnership.

And finally, thank you to the El Conquistador, a Hilton Resort. There is a new general manager since last year's event, so if you haven't met him yet, please welcome General Manager Otten Suarez. Thank you for your hospitality and service.

This is my first State of the Town Address, and as I was preparing, I recalled one of the first things I said after I was sworn into office: I had observed that public officials are ordinary people who have a desire to serve and make their community a better place. I still believe that. I believe everyone on this Council feels similarly. It's a privilege to serve as Mayor of the Town of Oro Valley.

And this is a very exciting time for our community, as we are already seeing successes that support the goals in our Strategic Leadership Plan. As Dr. Robbins referenced, the U of A's expansion in Oro Valley with the anticipated veterinary college and the operation of the planned incubator, are significant opportunities for Oro Valley and its future. The recent sale of the Oro Valley Marketplace to locally-owned Town West Realty and their partners opens the door to reimagine the retail center and create a destination for shopping, dining and entertainment. Partnerships with the Regional Transportation Authority and Pima County for the widening of La Cholla will result in a significant transportation improvement in the Town that will serve our community for decades.

Oro Valley truly is a community of excellence. Our citizens are engaged. Our Town staff cares deeply about the work they do. This is why we live in one of the safest communities in Arizona. We have the best roads in the region. We value views, open space and attractive architecture in our developed areas. We support quality jobs and businesses. We welcome opportunities to enjoy events, programs and the outdoors with our family and friends. We are proud of our schools and appreciate our faith communities. The list goes on.

But instead of trying to tell you about these important values that we all share, I'd like to show you with a brief video.

## \*\*\* TRANSCRIPT OF ORO VALLEY VIDEO \*\*\*

Oro Valley: Scenic, well-designed, safe.

The faces of Oro Valley span generations. Generations of people who believe in this community.

We are active. Adventurous. And dedicated. Dedicated to our roles as: leaders, scientists, educators, neighbors, parents, students and public servants. Working to become a complete community.

To get there, we must plan. Maintain our shared values. Nurture existing partnerships and embrace new ones. Preserve what we value most and prepare for the opportunities that lie ahead.

We all want to enjoy a quality lifestyle. Places to gather and celebrate. Pathways to run, ride and stroll. Places to play, to enrich our senses. Quality schools for our children. A thriving local economy, with the Catalina Mountains as our backdrop in this beautiful place we call home. Oro Valley's future looks golden, and together, we will go forward.

We are families. We are friends. We are a community. All working towards one goal. To make Oro Valley a complete community.

Community: It's in our nature.

# \*\*\* MAYOR WINFIELD SPEAKS \*\*\*

You'll notice not everything in the video is representative of Town government and services. We've also included the broader community because it takes all of us, working together, toward those same values. And we can more effectively work together when we have a shared vision and acknowledge the contributions of others.

A successful, thriving community is the result of thoughtful planning, goals and good policy decisions. That is why, when I took office last November, my first priority was to work with my fellow Councilmembers and staff to develop a two-year Strategic Leadership Plan which builds upon our collective guiding principles and Oro Valley's vision which is presented in the voter-approved, *Your Voice*, *Our Future* General Plan.

The Strategic Leadership Plan isn't just a guiding document for day-to-day operations. It is also a commitment to the community. A pledge to our residents and businesses about what they can expect to see over the next two fiscal years. And today, I would like to highlight the plan. We've provided a copy in the bags you received at registration. It can also be found on the Town's website.

The Strategic Leadership Plan encompasses seven key focus areas for your Town government: economic vitality; culture and recreation; public safety; roads, water and Town assets; land use; effective and efficient government; and Town finances.

To help me unpack the plan and the many ways in which it is being implemented, I've invited three Oro Valley staff members to talk about their respective focus areas. Our Community and Economic Development Director, JJ Johnston, is going to highlight economic vitality. We're going to hear from Oro Valley's Parks & Recreation Director, Kristy Diaz-Trahan. Kristy couldn't be here today, but we've got a video message from her about many of the exciting things happening in Parks and Recreation. And finally, Police Chief Danny Sharp will speak on the focus area of public safety.

But first, I'd like to say a few words about the land use focus area.

As you may know, since it was incorporated in 1974, Oro Valley has grown through a series of annexations. We have directed the Town Manager and staff to create a comprehensive annexation blueprint to guide the Town's strategic growth and economic expansion. Our goal is to support quality development with integrated architecture and natural open space to maintain and enhance the character of our community. That is no small task.

As a landscape architect, I am keenly aware of the importance of purposeful development. The Catalina Mountains are part of our identity. So it is important for our development philosophy—both commercial and residential—to be well-designed, practical and sustainable to help maintain that identity while continuing our quality of life.

All too often the community discourse about development is labeled as either pro-development or anti-development. Those labels are too simplistic, and they are a disservice to what we try to do as a town. When I review a proposal, I ask myself, "Does this capture the guidelines, goals and policies of our general plan?"

And there are so many factors that go into the planning and zoning process. It's not a simple two plus two equation. It's more complicated than that. Water and utilities, roads and public safety, parks and open space, finance and economics. They must all be factored in. And ultimately, the Mayor and Council do their best to listen to the citizens, and so that's how I try to approach these discussions.

We want to figure out how to work with commercial properties and our business owners to keep Oro Valley vibrant, but also help local businesses thrive.

This has never been more important than it is now—in the age of Amazon, where you can order virtually anything and have it on your doorstep the next day. We must be willing to ask the hard questions to respond to the changing buying patterns and retail landscape. Those changes have resulted in the decline of traditional brick and mortar stores, challenging the economic health of local communities. It is critical that we work to keep those dollars in our community, and that we are making policy decisions to support economic vitality. This is one of the focus areas in our Strategic Leadership Plan.

To that end, JJ Johnston has been working this past year to revitalize Oro Valley's Community and Economic Development Strategy, which Council approved just a few weeks ago. So I would like to invite him to the microphone to talk a little more about economic vitality.

### \*\*\* JJ JOHNSTON SPEAKS \*\*\*

## Thank you Mayor Winfield!

And yes, economic vitality is essential for Oro Valley's success, both now and into the future. And as you heard from President Robbins, there is a very bright future ahead as we partner with the University of Arizona. We are on the right track, but there is more work to be done.

Back in 2016, when the residents of Oro Valley helped create the voter-approved *Your Voice, Our Future* General Plan, they overwhelmingly expressed the need for a diverse, strong and sustainable economy.

The Strategic Leadership Plan has set out clear goals in direct support of the general plan. And to ensure that economic vitality continues to be a top priority for years to come, Council has recently adopted the five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Let me give you a few examples of what this means for Oro Valley.

It means we're focused on fueling the "start-up" economy.

We're focused on retaining, expanding and attracting new businesses.

We're focused on continuous process improvements and achieving peak performance in our operations.

We're focused on updating our competitive incentives that will encourage primary employers to fill empty buildings and invest in new facilities.

And we are especially focused on competing for and winning world class projects!

We're working with the Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council to create targeted commercial code amendments. This will add greater flexibility for redeveloping commercial properties.

There is also great excitement as we work with Town West Realty and their partners at the Oro Valley Marketplace.

President Robbins speaks eloquently about the dawn of the fourth industrial revolution. That simply means the global economic transformation being driven by the fusion of the physical, biological and the digital economies. Today, there is a significant transformational change that is reshaping and driving the new economy in Oro Valley. Advanced business services, aerospace and defense, autonomous vehicles, engineering, artificial intelligence, information technology, ubiquitous mobile supercomputing and other business opportunities will gravitate to our region.

In Oro Valley, it's in our nature to explore, discover and advance new technologies and companies.

Back in 1985, local pathologist and University of Arizona researcher, Dr. Thomas Grogan invented a state-of-theart tissue-based diagnostics tool right here in Oro Valley. His discoveries ultimately led to the creation of Ventana Medical Systems, which was acquired by international pharmaceutical giant, Roche Tissue Diagnostics. They employ about 1,700 people, representing 37 different nationalities. Ventana's story is one of the many reasons Oro Valley has earned a reputation as a bio-science and high-tech hub. And we will continue to strive for a diverse workforce, primary employers and innovative start-ups.

As Oro Valley strives to become a complete community, where people can live AND work, we strengthen our own economy. Our sales tax dollars stay right here. Our local businesses thrive. It's all connected. Each of us plays a part in our community's success.

So thanks to each of you for the role you play in Oro Valley's economic vitality. Please continue to help seize the exciting opportunities that lie ahead for Oro Valley and the entire region.

Back to you, Mayor Winfield.

\*\*\* MAYOR WINFIELD SPEAKS \*\*\*

Thank you, JJ.

The work you and your team are doing now will be foundational to the future of Oro Valley.

And as you've just heard, economic vitality is reliant on many things. It is the overall quality of life—all these elements working in concert—that draws a workforce and new business. One of those elements that makes Oro Valley such an exceptional place is our infrastructure. This leads me to the next focus area: roads, water and Town assets.

As a result of good policies and financial planning, Oro Valley continues its reputation for having some of the best roads in the region. And we are proud of that. Because it's not just about new construction. It's also about maintaining what we already have. This fiscal year, the Town has budgeted \$1.45 million for the Town's annual Pavement Preservation Program to ensure that Oro Valley's roads remain in the best condition for our residents.

But, as you may have noticed, we do have a couple road construction projects going on right now.

The La Cholla Boulevard widening project will provide commuters from all across Pima County another north-south, four-lane divided road. That project is expected to wrap up next fall. And there is also the La Cañada and Moore intersection safety improvement project. Roundabout construction began September 18 and should be completed by November 22.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that many of our projects, such as Tangerine Road and La Cholla, are the result of partnerships with the Regional Transportation Authority, Pima Association of Governments, Pima County and the Town of Marana. Roads do not stop at town limits. We are interconnected, and the entire region benefits when we work together to fund and construct safe and efficient roadways. So I offer a sincere thank you to each of our partners. We are better together.

Our Water Utility has also had an outstanding year. The Utility recently increased its capacity to deliver Central Arizona Project water by 30 percent with the commissioning of the Utility's fourth CAP water interconnect. The capacity to deliver more CAP water further offsets the use of groundwater to meet the community's potable water needs. More impressively, the Water Utility is projecting that groundwater pumping for 2019 will be the lowest it has been in more than 23 years.

Clearly, when it comes to infrastructure, the Town of Oro Valley continues to deliver. But something else we also know how to deliver is family-friendly fun! There's a lot of fun to be had in the focus area of culture and recreation, and there's no-one better suited to talk about fun in Oro Valley than our own Parks and Recreation Director, Kristy Diaz-Trahan. As I mentioned earlier, Kristy couldn't be with us today, but she's left us a video message.

# \*\*\* TRANSCRIPT OF KRISTY DIAZ-TRAHAN'S VIDEO \*\*\*

Morning Oro Valley! Thank you for letting me be part of the State of the Town. We're going to go for a ride in these beautiful park facilities in Oro Valley. See ya!

We're here at Steam Pump Ranch on a Saturday morning at the Famers Market. I talk about parks and recreation making connections. Connecting people to people. Places to places. And people to the community. This is one of our gems in our community. We're here to get some fresh food, because food connects people too. Let's go!

This year we will continue to invest in Steam Pump Ranch by adding irrigation, turf, and colorful shading to the backyard of the Procter-Leiber House. That will create another great space to enjoy. Next up, James D. Kriegh Park.

Look at this fantastic view! Isn't it stunning out here at James D. Kreigh Park? This past year we installed a new irrigation system and new sod for improved playability. Not only do the kids get to enjoy it, but look behind me. We started an adult kickball league that is fantastic. We will be adding another restroom on the north end of the property as well as another ramada. So that way, people can come over here, rent ramadas and play sports, and again—love their community and love their parks and recreation.

JDK Park is also home to our world class Aquatic Center that hosts a multitude of events for amateur and elite athletes. Now, let's head over to Naranja Park.

This beautiful facility is home to football, lacrosse, soccer, senior softball. And it is going to be home to our future destination-worthy playground right over there.

We are here at our Community Center. Again, this is where people make connections to people, to places, to our community. This year, we added two new pickleball courts. We're starting a league. We already have 60 people in that league! What we're doing as a community in parks and recreation is fantastic. And again, it's making sure that people connect with people; they connect with nature, and they connect to our community. And that's what we're doing here.

Over the next several months, we will be asking YOU what you want from your parks and recreation system through an extensive, community-wide outreach effort. Once that's completed, we will compile all that data to develop a system-wide master plan. That plan will be the vision for our future.

With everything we have accomplished and everything on the horizon, this is very exciting for Oro Valley Parks and Recreation.

As we conclude this morning, I want to assure everyone that your Parks and Recreation team is on target for success.

### \*\*\* MAYOR WINFIELD SPEAKS \*\*\*

We always appreciate Kristy's energy and enthusiasm. And we're very proud of our Parks and Recreation Department for providing programs, amenities and events that bring the community together.

While we're on the topic of Parks and Recreation, I have a few remarks about the Council's recent decision to retain 36 holes of golf and make it a success.

One of my campaign commitments was to reduce the golf losses. After months of public input, legal counsel, and Town Manager Mary Jacobs' financial analysis for the various options, it became increasingly apparent to me that the Town could best be served by keeping the 36 holes. The problem was: How do we reduce the cost and increase revenue to provide this amenity at a tax subsidy level supported by a majority of residents?

Earlier I spoke about our partnership with the U of A in breaking ground on a new business incubator. This project would likely not have materialized if the multiple private-public partners had not come together to make it happen. After attending the ground breaking, I realized that the same community spirit and participation by all stakeholders could make 36 holes of golf succeed.

Ms. Jacobs and staff have developed plans and forecasts to improve the Town's golf operations, reduce costs and increase play. According to her budget forecast, we will be able to reduce losses by \$200,000 this year, \$900,000 next year, and \$1,100,000 in Fiscal Year 21/22.

One of our strategies to meet those financial goals is to grow both our memberships and level of outside play. Our 36 holes of golf have the capacity for 80,000 rounds a year. We currently host about 50,000 rounds on the two 18-hole courses. To meet Ms. Jacobs' projections, we need to increase revenues. For example, 35 new memberships and another 10,000 rounds of outside play would get us there.

Council and the Town Manager have tasked our very capable Parks and Recreation Director with leading this effort to grow course usage, in partnership with the Town's golf operator. I am asking this group of community leaders to join the others who have invested in our golf courses.

You can join as a member like I have. You can join as a company through corporate membership. Or you can sponsor a tournament. In fact, there's a corporate membership flier conveniently located in the bags you received. And Troon representatives are here today to answer your questions and sign you up for the best golf in the region! And if you're already a member, thank you! Please help recruit others or sponsor youth golfers.

The Greater Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce Board voted unanimously to support the purchase of these courses. Chamber President Dave Perry has come before Council to express the business and tourism benefits of keeping the 36 holes.

Other communities are closing courses and selling the land for development. The Town's courses are exceptional, but they are expensive to operate and maintain. So help us grow the game of golf here in Oro Valley. Together, we can retain and enjoy this community asset.

Being able to work together, pursue our interests, raise our families, run our businesses and sleep soundly at night are only possible when they exist on a foundation of public safety. When people feel safe, they are able to thrive. Safe communities are strong communities. That is why public safety is one of the focus areas in our Strategic Leadership Plan.

This is another area where Oro Valley continues to blaze trails, both regionally and nationally. Public safety is part of our brand, and that is due—in no small part—to the leadership of Chief Danny Sharp, and his philosophy of community policing. As many of you know, Danny will be retiring in February—and it's a well-earned retirement! He has spent 41 years in law enforcement, and more than 20 of them right here in Oro Valley. So it is my pleasure to now turn the mic over to Chief Danny Sharp.

### \*\*\* CHIEF SHARP SPEAKS \*\*\*

## Good morning!

I am here today filled with both pride and gratitude. As Mayor Winfield noted, I'll be retiring in February after 41 years in law enforcement. When asked to speak this year, I realized how significant this moment would be. I have been given the opportunity, in my final year as your police chief, to publicly thank this wonderful community for such tremendous support, and for the trust you have placed in me, as well as the men and women of the Oro Valley Police Department.

I know you are all aware of the great passion and dedication your police department has for serving Oro Valley. You also know that our brand is "full-service community policing." In order to be a full-service community policing agency, we must ensure and maintain public trust. We have earned this trust because of the exceptional work our staff performs, in partnership with strong support from our community. Oro Valley understands the idea that safety isn't everything... it's the only thing. And that is why the Town's General Plan places public safety first and foremost.

I often tell people that I am the luckiest person in the world because I work with the finest men and women in law enforcement. What is equally true: I work for the finest community in the state.

I have always encouraged continuous improvement within my organization. I want the members of the department to look for innovative, out-of-the-box ideas that push us and challenge us. As a result, your Oro Valley Police Department has earned a reputation for excellence, both nationally and internationally. Here are just a few of the successful programs that have earned recognition:

Our High Visibility Enforcement program, also known as HiVE, is aimed at traffic safety and education.

Our drone program, called UAV, is one of the most advanced drone programs in law enforcement, utilizing cutting edge software to more efficiently map crime scenes and car crashes.

We lead the way in officer safety innovations. Our Discrete Conspicuity Project involves uniform garments designed to increase nighttime visibility and enhance officer safety.

We are a regional leader in Active Shooter Training, providing the latest training and tactics to Town staff, businesses and community groups, so they are better prepared and know how to respond in the event there is an active shooter.

And soon, the department will begin training all officers in the Interdiction for the Protection of Children, also known as IPC. This important training helps our officers detect and protect children from human trafficking.

Again, these are just a few of the programs for which we've been recognized both nationally and internationally. Effective public safety comes down to trust and our ability to understand and adapt to the changing needs of our community.

Some of our other non-traditional police services you may have heard of include programs such as Adopt-A-Business, Community Assistance Program, Gals! Start your Engines, and Self-Defense Awareness and Fight Education also known as SAFE. These kinds of police services are what set us apart from other organizations, and we are able to bring these innovative ideas to fruition because Oro Valley is a community that supports our staffing, training and equipment needs. So thank you!

Our agency is also a cut above the rest because of our volunteers. Simply stated: they are the best. And we have nearly 100 of them! These dedicated individuals are an essential component of our full-service, community policing brand. They spend countless hours patrolling, fingerprinting, supporting special events, and so much more.

It's no secret that Oro Valley is known as one of the safest towns in the state. In fact, this year SafeWise ranked Oro Valley as the number one safest city in Arizona. This is an important designation because public safety promotes economic growth and encourages families to buy homes, play in our parks, attend our schools and visit our businesses. As the Mayor mentioned, "When people feel safe, they are able to thrive." Everything begins with public safety, and our time-tested recipe for success is the tremendous work of our law enforcement professionals and the exceptional trust and support of our community.

Full-service community policing is our brand, and it's why the Town of Oro Valley has a long-standing reputation as a community of excellence. It has been my honor to serve as your Police Chief for the past 20 years.

Thank you.

#### \*\*\* MAYOR WINFIELD SPEAKS \*\*\*

## Thank you, Chief.

With Chief Sharp's retirement, there will be a leadership transition in the Oro Valley Police Department, and we're working right now on that recruitment process. Even though we will soon lose him as Chief, what remains is a culture and legacy of public safety that has been built over these many years. We are in good hands with the men and women of the Oro Valley Police Department, who will continue providing excellent service and keeping us safe.

Public safety, roads and water, parks and recreation, land use and economic vitality. These are the foundations of a complete community. But bringing all this together requires a well-run local government. It's not an unreasonable expectation on your part that town government be efficient and effective. We feel the same way, because there will always be areas for improvement and opportunities to grow. That is why the Strategic Leadership Plan includes the focus area of effective and efficient government.

Town staff is constantly working to keep this focus front and center. This is evidenced by the Town Manager's process improvement initiative. Processes are improved, time and resources are saved, and greater efficiency is achieved.

An electronic asset management system has been expanded in both the Water Utility and Parks and Recreation to better track time and materials, providing more accurate data on the cost of owning and maintaining our facilities.

Another goal in this focus area is community engagement. The Town continues to add to its menu of options on how residents can engage with Council and staff.

We've upped our social media presence, by expanding to Instagram and LinkedIn, by adding more video content on Facebook, and continued engagement on NextDoor. And we've implemented FlashVote, an online survey tool to gather public input on a variety of topics.

Residents also have more traditional options to ask questions or provide feedback by calling or emailing Ask OV or by using the online portal. In addition, all of those questions and comments are provided to Council for our review and consideration.

If face-to-face conversations are what you prefer, then you'll be pleased to hear that this month, we kicked off a new initiative called Know Your Town Council, which gives residents the opportunity to engage with us and get to know us better. Keep an eye out for our table at special events throughout the year. My fellow Councilmembers and I hope to see you there and get a chance to chat.

Later this fiscal year, you can also look forward to a brand new website. We'll still be at OroValleyAZ.gov, but we'll have a new look and improved functionality.

So whatever your preference—phone, email, social media, web or old-fashioned in-person conversation—we are eager to engage with you!

The final focus area in our Strategic Leadership Plan is Town finances. Finances are Council's way of letting residents know we value a stable financial future for local government. I'm happy to report that this Town Council complied with State law and adopted a balanced budget for the 2020 Fiscal Year, continuing the Town's strong financial position. This budget also supports the Council's Strategic Leadership Plan. We recently learned from our Finance Department that the Town's general fund ran a \$1.6 million surplus last year. Those surplus funds can be used for capital improvement projects and the Town's Public Safety Pension Retirement System.

On top of that great news, Standard and Poor's recently upgraded the Town's bond rating to AA+.

Guided by the Strategic Leadership Plan, this organization will continue to align our capital investments with our financial policies. We need to live within our means, broaden our revenue, and continue to keep an eye on the future, by forecasting what the local and national economy may do. This will help us to remain flexible and prepared.

And this important work is being performed by talented staff, in partnership with the newly established Budget and Finance Commission. Their work is another example of how we are striving to expand public input on important issues and Town finances. I would like to also commend and thank all of our volunteers serving on Town Boards & Commissions or other areas—past and present.

There are some other people I would also like to acknowledge.

While Council is responsible for determining priorities, setting policy and providing direction, we rely on Town staff to bring our vision to fruition in their day-to-day operations. We appreciate their service and dedication to our community. If you are a member of Town staff, please stand so we can recognize you.

Thank you.

I would also like to thank Town Manager Mary Jacobs for her commitment and leadership. Mary, would you please stand.

Thank you, Mary.

Events like this require a lot of planning, coordination, and hard work. I would like to express my appreciation to everyone who has had a role in this year's State of the Town. Thank you! It has been my good fortune to have been supported by many individuals this past year in a variety of ways, and I am grateful for each of them, but admittedly there is one person who stands above the rest and that is my wife Mariann. Thank you sweetheart!

It truly takes a village, because everything is connected. The support systems we have in our personal lives. The sense of community we feel when we bring our family to a Town event. The confidence that we are safe in our homes and neighborhoods. The loyalty we have for our local businesses. The faith we have in one another.

There is a reason Oro Valley continues to be a desirable place to live, work and play. We are working together to become a complete community, and everyone in this room plays a part in that. And Council's Strategic Leadership Plan is a roadmap to ensure we are prepared to face the challenges ahead without compromising our exceptional quality of life.

It's a privilege to serve as your Mayor, and I look forward to working with each of you in the years ahead.

Thank you.

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