

State of The City Address 2023

Thank you Mr Willis for the introduction -

Good evening

My name is Daniel J Mahoney

Want to thank God for grace and guidance

My mother and father for raising me to be the human I am, my brother and pastor Shaunta Patton for his spiritual advice, my other siblings, my team and circle of friends for keeping me grounded, my 5 daughters Callie, Sophie, Livi, CeeCee and Ila for reminding me daily of my reason why and my wife Semaj for being my best friend, my partner, my therapist, a listening ear and a supporter of everything I do.

I want to acknowledge and thank all clergy and any elected officials from the county and state that might be present tonight,

Thank you to all the City of Jackson staff and Council members who are here tonight and those not here but tuned in,
it's truly been a pleasure to serve along side you all.

Would like to give a special thank you tonight to Lisa, Aaron, Jonathan, Kelli and Tone for assisting in putting the details together for tonights event.

Its been 1 year 3 months 28 days 18 hours, 16 minutes and 48 seconds since I was sworn in as Mayor of the City of Jackson

Not that Im keeping track or anything... you know they say times flies when you're having fun... and I can believe its already been a full year since my first state of the city address.

I have to say it has sincerely been my highest honor to serve the citizens of the city of Jackson and I am inspired and motivated to continue serving as we look upon the horizon of the future.

Last year I reported the state of our city to be in a renaissance, a rebuilding phase Winston Churchill said "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it" and as I studied the different periods of history I don't think it's a coincidence where we are not today as a city.

The State of the City is moving from a renaissance to a Reformation -

The Oxford dictionary definition of Reformation is "The action or process of reforming an institution or practice"

[Vocabulary.com](https://www.vocabulary.com) defines it as the act or process of changing a religious, political or societal institution for the BETTER.

In other words we are in a State of Changing the processes of our political and societal institutions for the BETTER.

After the renaissance period in history came reformation and enlightenment and as I studied more I learned this was a time where human reasoning would discover truths about the world, religion and politics and it was used to improve the lives of mankind. It was a time where everything was to be subjected to testing and rational analysis.

Skepticism was at an all time high -
Sound familiar?

Im sure Im not the only one with a few Facebook philosopher friends and aware that social media is the first place where news makes it to... things are changing... and regardless of how it may look, I believe in the end it will all work out to be for the BETTER.

Ive learned in my time of being involved in politics that people don't care how much you say you care.

They want to know 3 things. What did you say you would do, What did you do, and What are you going to do now.

Public Safety:

Last year we made a commitment to work on reducing violence and increasing public safety, beginning with implementing the Group Violence Intervention as part of the strategy and cohosting the first Summit to Reduce Violence. The department hired the GVI Coordinator Cheryl Ragland, we hired 6 new officers as well as other investigative and community efforts.

The impact of these efforts has led to a reduction in gun homicides from 7 in 2021 to 4 in 2022 a 57% reduction

Total gunshot victims are down from 31 in to 2021 to 14 in 2022 a 45% reduction and we are committed to reducing those numbers even further in the coming years.

We are continuing to work the GVI strategy, the 2nd Summit to Reduce Violence is scheduled for April 21st, and we have several citizens working to organize neighborhood watch groups.

Neighborhood Revitalization (Housing):

Last year we recognized the severity of the housing crisis in Jackson and we acknowledge the effects of some of the actions taken by previous administrations misjudgment in the demolition of several houses that contributed to this problem. We committed to working on this issues and announced several project that would be taking shape to assist in addressing this issue.

Over the last year the city has sold over 45 vacant city owned lots, created a buildable lot program to assist in creating interest in developing new single family homes, signed the necessary agreements to start the Greenwood Apartment project, we recently signed an agreement with a developer to who is purchasing 137 vacant city owned lots to build new single family homes to rent with a target market of those who are 80% to 120% AMI and approved the Affordable Housing Commissions plan to partner with another developer and some of the great organizations in our community to build 100 new owner occupied homes with a target market of those who are 60% to 80% AMI where we will provide down payment assistance, that's 237 new homes being built in the city of Jackson and will be the most new homes built in the city since World War II, and yes the \$28 million redevelopment of The Hayes Hotel is still going to happen and we should see the start of this project in November.

Economic Development:

Economic development and supporting the businesses in our community is what allows us to continue to grow as a city. We have shown our commitment to continuing the growth in several ways. In the last year we've welcomed additional businesses in downtown like the Blue Julep, RJ's Heavenly Delights, the recent ribbon cutting of the Commonwealth, we officially opened the downtown social district and have accepted a bid on the former Masonic Temple now The City Center to develop the commissary kitchen incubator that will allow food trucks, caterers and other food concept businesses a place to continue to thrive and grow.

Revitalizing Jacksons Southside:

Last year we made a commitment to make an intentional reinvestment in Jacksons South Side. The Martin Luther King Corridor Improvement Authority who is tasked with the mission of promoting economic growth and development by aiding in the reinvestment and revitalization of property and supporting business opportunities within its districts has been making some major movement. The City approved the MLK CIA expanded development area and TIF plan

We purchased a lot on prospect with plan to build a grocery store on, in addition approved a \$4.5 million dollar allocation to the MLK CIA. Those dollars will be used to build the grocery store that the south side has been asking for for over 20 years , We currently have a request for proposal posted on the city website to seek developers interested in working on the project.

In addition the dollars will be used to create an entrepreneur grant fund that existing and new entrepreneurs and property owners within the corridor will be able to apply for. The City has also applied for a grant with the State of Michigan that if awarded would allow for a complete reconstruction of MLK from south street down to Morrell top and bottom, this mean underground infrastructure, street scapes, sidewalks and street.

This year we also created a collaboration with Jackson College to bring college classes right here to the King Center, that in addition to all the other programming happening at the King Center is the reason why we are also working diligently to fulfill the promise of an expansion of this building we are currently in the Martin Luther King Center, we recently submitted a \$4 million request to the federal government to pay for the expansion.

DEI:

As a City who has made a commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion we look forward to continuing to live that commitment. Last year we celebrated Asian American Heritage month by planting a Cherry Blossom tree in a city park, sponsored and supported the first ever Hispanic Heritage Festival in Downtown, sponsored and supported Juneteenth Family Festival and in honor of the now national holiday raised the Red, Black and Green flag during the month of June as well as continuing to celebrate and embrace our LGBTQ community with collaborations with the Jackson Pride Center, we also honored Native American Heritage Month by delivering a proclamation to descendants of the Potawatomi Tribe who still live here in Jackson

Homelessness:

Last year we received several request for assistance in helping with the issue of homelessness. From business owners in the downtown area who were overwhelmed to concerned citizens who just wanted someone else to care enough to help, this was an issue we heard about from month to month urging the City to take action.

While I think I can speak on behalf of all of council in the fact that none of us are experts in the area of serving the homeless citizens in our community we all feel it is our duty to do what we can to help.

We funded an emergency hotel program for the homeless to provide a safe warm place to be during the most vulnerable months of the year and we partnered with Residence in Action to provide structure and implementation of the project. Residence in action served over 80 unique individuals and several families with children over all during this project, providing hotel vouchers, food and other necessities.

We also purchased TA Wilson and 10 pallet shelters to create a transitional housing project with the collaboration of some community partners to run the sight. We are hopeful that our efforts will have an impact on reducing the amount of street homeless and assist in the lack of transitional housing available in the community.

So what can you expect to see from City of Jackson as we continue to press forward in to the future?

Roads:

A long term plan to address the condition of our roads, while fixing the roads may sound like an easy and reasonable request the fact of the matter is its complex and layered.

Working to balance not overwhelming our citizens and businesses with assessments and creating a realistic plan to address the major roads as well as the streets that run through out our neighborhoods.

Sustainability plan and Energy Audit of city owned infrastructure

I have also requested the Environmental Commission to work on updating a more detailed Sustainability Plan for the City of Jackson. This plan was requested to be comprised of 5 areas - Solid Waste Removal because we as a community deserve better than to be collectively paying \$4.2 million a year in waste removal.

Carbon/ Methane Neutrality because its the environmentally responsible thing to do
Renewable Energy because there are more efficient ways of powering our community

Green Construction because we should be rewarding the corporations who are coming in our community with plans that include stewardship of our environment
And Clean Water because we need it to live. And we are starting this plan with an energy audit on our city owned facilities to learn where we can do better ourselves

Broadband Taskforce:

We will soon be developing a broadband Taskforce to create a plan to close the digital divide. George Clinton said the revolution won't be televised but it will be digitized and we must work hard to make sure all citizens have fair and equitable access to high speed internet. This access makes a difference and a Childs ability to learn and do homework as well as an adults ability to find employment, COVID has shown the world of work that productivity is possible from home and there is no turning back from at this point. 7% of our citizen are completely unserved which isn't bad for a community our size, however 58.9% of our citizens are underserved - underserved means a location that lacks access to reliable broadband service. This Taskforce will work to develop a plan so that Jackson can take advantage of the \$42 Billion federal grant program to close the divide in Jackson.

I look forward to the challenges and opportunities we will face and the work ahead to bring all of our plans to fruition. I am confident that we have what it take to get this all done, just look at what we've been able to accomplish in the last year.

But we can not do it with out your help, your input and your support.

We look forward to working together to continue Building a Better Jackson.

We look forward to continuing building a city with safe, vibrant, walkable neighborhoods, with a thriving economy, well maintained infrastructure, where anyone can feel at a home, look to raise a family or retire and where local government exists to serve the citizens of the community.

Thank you.