

2014

The City of **Nicholasville**

*Report to the  
Community*

NICHOLASVILLE  
Community Pride

[nicholasville.org](http://nicholasville.org)

# Letter from the Mayor



Dear Fellow Citizens,

It's hard for me to believe that this is the last issue of Report to the Community that I will write a letter for as mayor.

We began producing this publication in 2009 as a way to keep all residents informed about changes happening in our city. It's amazing what we've accomplished in recent years.

We've made Main Street much more attractive, safe and inviting. We've seen new businesses move into downtown buildings to the point that they are 90% occupied. With the help of several grants, we've made significant road, water and waste water treatment system improvements. And, we keep bringing new jobs here—more than 2,700 since 2007.

What I'm most proud of is how everyone in Nicholasville works together for common goals. There is a high level of cooperation and pride, which makes this a great place to live, work and play.

Thank you for the privilege of serving you for the past 14 years as mayor and commissioner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russ Meyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Russ Meyer  
Mayor

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# Your City Commission

Some people think working for a city is easy. However, planning for and funding municipal needs is not as simple as it might appear.

For example, Nicholasville's leaders have to estimate during the summer how much snow will fall the next winter so they can purchase ample salt for the roads. They must anticipate how much electricity will be needed years down the road to negotiate contracts and determine which underground water pipes need to be replaced before they break.

City Commissioners take on tasks most people don't want to think about—water treatment and sewer systems, crime and fire protection, keeping the lights on and the community warm, and maintaining miles of streets. When public officials do their jobs well, you usually don't have to think of those things at all, other than to pay your utility bills. However, if we get an unusual amount of snow, rain, heat or wind, we all become more aware and are thankful there are dedicated personnel on board.

Here are some of the accomplishments brought about by your City officials:

## **Water and Sewer**

**Sewer Department:** Work continues on the Brookview Sanitary Sewer project to replace older lines with 2,500 linear feet of 18-inch and 21-inch gravity sewer lines. The City received funding for this project to tie existing and new systems together, including the industrial development at Bradley Drive and Industry Parkway.

## **Public Safety**

**Fire Department:** A new fire engine was delivered this summer. This unit has a 750-gallon water tank, 1,500 gallon-per-minute pump and many advanced safety features to provide enhanced protection for our firefighters.

We completed another successful Nicholasville Fire Department (NFD) Christmas toy drive in 2013. Through citizens' generous donations, we provided toys for nearly 800 children. In addition, donations for the NFD's Fill-the-Boot campaign in support of the Muscular Dystrophy Association were near record levels.

**Police Department:** The Nicholasville Police Department (NPD) has been diligent in keeping our community safe and our officers prepared and well equipped. Twelve new Police Interceptor SUVs provide added space and durability for the Criminal Investigations Division and patrol supervisors. The NPD again coordinated a multi-agency Active Shooter training for all first responders, school staff and volunteers.

School Resource Officer Billy King from East Jessamine High School received the 2013 National Exemplary School Safety Awareness Award and Officer Sam Wade from West Jessamine High School was named the Kentucky School Resource Officer of the Year for 2014. Officer Erik Cobb was awarded the State of Kentucky DUI Award for the NPD for the third consecutive year.

## **Administration and Finance**

**Streetscape Project:** The Streetscape project has progressed to Phase II with the new mast arm streetlight posts scheduled to be installed this fall.

**Finance:** Not only did the city receive another excellent report from its external auditor, but it also was awarded a stronger bond rating. The City of Nicholasville received an "AA" rating from Standard & Poor's, the highest rating given for a city of this size. This is a testament to the City's fiscal management and stability.

## **City Commissioners and Their Administrative Areas**

*Pete Sutherland*

Mayor Pro Tem

Electric & Meter Departments

*Betty Black*

Public Safety Departments

*Doug Blackford*

Water & Sewer Departments

*Russ Meyer*

Mayor

Administration & Finance

*Andy Williams*

Street Department & Cemetery



# A Heart for Service Brings First Female Firefighter to NFD

After working three part-time jobs to help pay for living expenses and pay off college loans, in 2012, Maegan Rogers, 24, made a big decision – to pursue a career as a firefighter.

While working at Dick's Sporting Goods one day, the Cincinnati native found herself exhausted and seeking God's guidance to help her choose a career. Suddenly she uttered, "I just want to be a firefighter."

God must have heard her, because that same day a captain of the Lexington Fire Department came into her department in his uniform. After helping him, she began to ask him questions about how to get hired as a firefighter. He was encouraging and told her about Lexington's Citizen's Fire Academy.

It was daunting at first, but Rogers realized she had made the right decision for her future after finishing the academy that fall.

As the first firefighter in her family, she surprised her parents by her choice to pursue a firefighting career, but they supported her once they realized she had firmly set her sights on the life-saving career.

"When I told them there was nothing else I could see myself doing as a career, they knew I was in it for real. They know that when I get passionate about doing something there is nothing that will stand in my way, so they got behind me and encouraged me all the way." Rogers added, "They do not worry about my safety because they know that my training and their prayers will keep me safe."

The majority of her family lives in Ohio, but they always keep in touch, encouraging Rogers and sharing in her excitement.

Some of that excitement may be that Rogers is the first female to be a full-time member of the Nicholasville Fire Department (NFD) since it



Maegan Rogers is breaking barriers and pursuing her career in Nicholasville with the NFD.

became a full-time department in December 1993.

On December 26, 2013, Rogers was hired as a recruit for the NFD, her first job as a firefighter. She started working on January 14, 2014, and finished the NFD's 12-week academy in April.

"I am still extremely new to this career and have a lot to learn," said Rogers. "I am just grateful for the opportunity the City of Nicholasville has given me to fulfill my dream job and be a firefighter."

It took Rogers a while to get comfortable in her new role, not only as the first female firefighter in Nicholasville, but also in a career she refers to as an "extremely complex profession." Now she rarely, if ever, thinks about being the only female.

"I owe much of this feeling of acceptance to the

whole Nicholasville Fire Department. I feel like all the other newbies; I come into work ready to learn from the other more experienced firefighters and officers," explained Rogers.

Her goal was just to become a firefighter/EMT, but being the first female firefighter for the city of Nicholasville is an honor and a responsibility she is more than happy to have, and she's already preparing to help future female Nicholasville firefighters.

"I hope to set a good example for future female Nicholasville firefighters by being disciplined in training, developing and maintaining a heart of service and love to the people of Nicholasville, being respectful to all those I work with and for, and lastly, to inspire them to never give up on themselves or others no matter what happens," said Rogers.

Rogers is open to talking to any aspiring female about the job, and offers sound advice to aspiring females.

"I would express the importance of taking on some sort of strength training program," she said. "Other than that, they need the same advice as anyone entering a new job: listen, work hard, come open-minded, and be grateful."

With her 12 weeks at the NFD academy behind her, Rogers is now on normal 24 hour shifts. She will continue her training and taking tests. For the remainder of the year, she also will gain more experience by spending time on all of the fire engines.

"In the fire service, training is never complete," said Rogers. "We are continuously learning throughout our career."

THE END OF AN ERA

## Fire Chief Brumfield Retires After 30 Years



*(from left)* Charles “Bubba” Brumfield, Charles Brumfield, and the late Walter Brumfield at the 2009 NFD Awards ceremony.

Fire Chief Charles “Bubba” Brumfield is hanging up his helmet after 30 years of dutiful service. A third generation fire chief in Nicholasville, he retired at the end of July.

When Brumfield joined the Nicholasville Fire Department (NFD) as a volunteer 30 years ago, his grandfather, Walter Brumfield, was chief and his father, Charles Brumfield, was assistant chief. Once his grandfather retired and his father was promoted to chief, Brumfield worked with his father as deputy chief.

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather and father wasn't always easy. Brumfield's time as deputy chief proved to be a difficult time both professionally and personally.

“It was tough personally, due to the fact that we could never escape the job,” said Brumfield. “Family gatherings were nearly the same as being at work because discussions at those events were typically topics concerning the department, where most families would be discussing ‘family things.’”

“Professionally, it was difficult to always have the feeling of a label slapped on your forehead due to the family ties and working together.”

Yet, the Brumfield family found a way to make their time as colleagues work.

“I remain proud that we were given the opportunity to provide a positive and successful example of how it can be done ... and we did,” said Brumfield.

With 10 years of experience as a volunteer and part-time firefighter, nine as a full-time career firefighter, and 11 as fire chief, all in Nicholasville, Brumfield has too many stories to pick just one as his favorite.

“The firehouse and the job in itself are always producing great stories and so many have come and gone,” he said.

The tragedy that comes with the job is the one thing Brumfield says he won't miss. More than anything else, he will miss going out and representing the fire department.

“It's always been a pleasure to do that, as I am most proud of the department and the people that make up the NFD,” said Brumfield.

In a note about his years of service, he said:

“I have enjoyed my time at the department immensely. I will forever cherish the memories and be grateful for the opportunities that I have been given. I feel truly blessed and proud of my association with such a remarkable group of men and women that make up the fire service. I thank the citizens for the trust they have placed in me during my time as their fire chief and I will pray for those that will carry the torch into the future. It has been a good ride.”

Brumfield will spend a good amount of his newfound free time decompressing on his boat or spending time on his motorcycle. He'll also spend more time with his family.

“I have a lot of lost ground to make up with my wife and kids, who have sacrificed so much over the years due to the nature of my job,” he said.

While Brumfield may have retired as Nicholasville fire chief, it isn't the end of his time in the workforce. He will venture into a new career that he has yet to determine.



The School Resource Officer program, which is jointly funded by all the local governments and the school board, has been a big success. Officers pictured are (from left) Sam Wade, West Jessamine High; Billy King, East Jessamine High; James Howard, East Jessamine Middle; Jacob Jones, West Jessamine Middle; and Clint Newton, The Providence School.

## Plans for Future of Nicholasville Fire Department

Before Chief Brumfield said farewell to his beloved department, he developed plans to meet the increased demand for fire protection services and the continued growth of the community.

Nicholasville officials were aware of the need to add more fire stations, manpower and equipment for a number of years. However, as the recession hit and city revenue declined, there simply weren't enough funds to keep pace with the growth. This resulted in a reduction in the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating.

With Commissioner Betty Black, who oversees the city's public safety services, Mayor Russ Meyer and others, Brumfield developed a plan they believe will minimize cost and maximize effectiveness of the City's firefighting forces.

Brumfield said the aggressive approach will provide "a path in the right direction for the city and the protection of its citizens."

The plan calls for relocating two fire stations, a move that would result in quicker response times and allow future fire stations to be more strategically positioned. It also would reduce the number of stations needed over the next 30 years from six to five while providing better coverage and protection overall for the city.

"By eliminating the need for a sixth fire station now, taxpayers could realize a savings of nearly \$2 million in equipment and building costs alone, along with a reduction in the amount of on-going personnel costs by about 15 percent annually," said Brumfield.

Commissioner Black believes such innovative thinking is consistent with city managers' leadership and the City Commission's philosophy of fiscal responsibility.

"It would have been easy for Chief Brumfield to retire and let the next chief deal with these challenges," said Black. "But he thought outside the box to come up with solutions that are less expensive as well as better. That's what leadership is all about."

## Officer Rainey Recognized by Vest Manufacturers

An "Officer Down" call on the police radio is a rare occurrence for the Nicholasville Police Department. Fortunately, when 18-year veteran officer John Paul Rainey was shot in the back, his ballistic vest did its job, enabling him to get back up and return fire.

Rainey had spotted someone acting suspiciously while on patrol October 19, 2012, in the Miles Road area. When he left his vehicle to investigate, he was ambushed. His vest, training and experience saved him from death or serious injury.

Rainey's heroics caught the attention of Mike Reichenbach and Robert Young of Safariland and American Body Armor, the makers of his vest. During a February 2013 Nicholasville City Commission meeting, the manufacturers honored Rainey.

Reichenbach said that while the vest stopped the bullet and prevented serious injury, Officer Rainey's training and practice was just as important in how he was able to respond.

The NPD is still investigating the shooting and welcomes information that may lead to an arrest in this crime.



## Keeping Nicholasville Up to Code

Have you seen any political signs that need to be taken down? What about an abandoned car? Is your neighbor not keeping their property up to code? If you answered yes, the Nicholasville Code Enforcement can help you.

Since the mid-70s Nicholasville has had code enforcement, but recently it was restructured to keep up with growth and public need. As the community became more educated on city ordinances, more complaints were called in.

Now Code Enforcement is a stand-alone department with a chief, a lieutenant, an ABC officer and three safety officers. Two sworn officers are also involved with the department. In addition, a Nuisance Hearing Board is being formed to handle citizen disputes on charges.

Some of the bigger issues the Code Enforcement Department has had to deal with include the Brannon Crossing development and water run off in subdivisions.

Since its inception, the department has enforced city ordinances, collected net profit taxes, and covered storm water run off complaints. According to Lt. Bill Jones, each year Code Enforcement averages between 1,000 – 1,200 cases on ordinance violations. Last year alone, the department wrote 120 parking tickets and issued 400 yard sale permits.

In 2013 the department's safety officers performed 216 funeral escorts. Also, about 129 miles worth of litter was picked up by summer help for Code Enforcement.

If you have a concern regarding code enforcement, you can fill out a Citizen Request Form located at the following website:

[http://nicholasville.org/pdfs/citizen\\_request\\_form.pdf](http://nicholasville.org/pdfs/citizen_request_form.pdf).

You can also contact Code Enforcement by phone (859.885.1121), fax (859.881.0750), or email ([billy\\_jones@nicholasville.org](mailto:billy_jones@nicholasville.org)).

## Fire Department Offers Free Services

In addition to protecting our homes and lives by fighting fires, the Nicholasville Fire Department offers two special services to the public – child safety seat and smoke detector installation.

Firefighters are trained in how to properly install child safety seats and will provide the service when you need it. If your child outgrows his or her safety seat and a new one needs to be installed, stop by any of the fire stations any time and one of them will switch it out for you. They also can make adjustments as your child grows.

Another service is the installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. If you're a Nicholasville resident, call 859.885.5505 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. week days to schedule an installation in your home at no charge.

Car safety seats and smoke detectors save lives. Protect those you love today by taking advantage of these free services.



# Bright Lights, Banners and No More Wires

## Downtown Streetscape Enhancement Moves into Phase II

Nicholasville's Main Street looked festive this summer with patriotic banners and color-coordinated flower baskets. And, as Phase II of the City's Downtown streetscape enhancement project kicks in, the City's future is just going to get brighter.

The biggest step will be the addition of mast arm traffic light poles that will eliminate the need for wires across Main Street's intersections in downtown. Installation of the new poles began in August.

The decorative streetlights that went up last year boasted 29 new flag banners that were hung in May. There were two designs for variety.

"The flags are really eye-catching and they look great with the hanging baskets full of petunias purchased by Nicholasville Tourism," said Nicholasville City Clerk Roberta Warren.

More banners were hung throughout downtown, from Oak to Chestnut, after the Art Depository's Paint-The-Town Banner Project in mid June. Residents young and old painted the 50 banners. Those on display include handprints and footprints of the younger crowd, flowers, and horses.

Nicholasville's downtown business district is now about 90 percent occupied as several new businesses have opened or soon will. Coach Light Antique Mall moved into 213 North Main and the Polvino Family Art Center celebrated its grand opening at 109 South Main in early June. The Center has generated a lot of new activity for downtown.

In addition to Main Street staples Euro Wine Bar and Nicholasville Cafe, and newcomers Brewer's Restaurant and Simmie's Soul Food, more dining options are slated for downtown. A new barbecue restaurant opened on E. Maple Street near Main, and J's Place, a new coffeehouse, opened in the historic building that was once Hemphill Pharmacy.

There was celebration in the summer of 2013 as Nicholasville saw the completion of Phase I of the downtown streetscape program. As with many projects, that major undertaking took longer than expected, but included extensive improvements to the streets, intersections, sidewalks, storm drainage, streetlights, and trees.

Soon, however, residents noted the new streetlights weren't putting off as much light as the previous ones and that downtown had become too dark. In response, City leaders requested assistance from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and hope to obtain a grant for the \$27,000 needed to retrofit the streetlights for brighter bulbs.

Community members also requested brighter lights and decorations for the Christmas season.

"When we put up the new street lights on Main, we were not able to attach the decorations we'd previously used. So we put up new ones, which were not like any we had before and not as popular," said Warren. "Unfortunately, the older decorations have seen better days, so they no longer can be used."



Phase II of the Streetscape project includes adding mast arms for traffic signals and removing the remaining wires that cross Main Street.

The City hopes to get new decorations in the budget at some point in the future. In the meantime, local officials plan to add more lights to the greenery during the 2014 holiday season, as well as using decorative LED lights that were purchased before the streetscape for both north and south of the downtown area.

It's taken time and patience, but downtown Nicholasville's future is bright and getting brighter.

## Report to the Community

# Same Room, Big Difference

**Before:** The room was cramped, dark, and not at all attractive. White acoustic tiles that lined the walls were used like a bulletin board to randomly hang maps, signs, and posters of various types. Attendees often could not hear or see what was going on even though board members and speakers were only feet away.

**After:** The room feels larger, brighter, and little touches, such as columns, add appeal. New chairs are inviting, and historic Nicholasville prints, nicely matted and framed, are a reminder of the progress the community has made. Built-in video and audio equipment make it easier to hear and to record a more complete view of the important meetings conducted here.

By any standards, the City of Nicholasville's boardroom is modest. But, after a much-needed remodeling job, it's now much more functional and attractive for those who conduct and participate in the City's official meetings.

Nicholasville City Clerk Roberta Warren spearheaded the process. Her goal was to make the most of the small space.

"This renovation was spurred in part by recent updates to the state open meetings law. It now requires that people be able to hear every word that's said in government meetings," said Warren. "Our sound system was so outdated that people couldn't hear much of what was said."

Other technology also enhances City Commission and Planning Commission meetings. A projector hung from the ceiling enables easy presentation of documents, photos, and maps on a screen that lowers at the touch of a button. Multiple remote controlled cameras mounted around the room allow the videographer to capture the speaker's face regardless of his or her location.

"We extended the board table three feet so there is now room for all of the Planning Commission



The newly refurbished Board Room includes more seating for board members and guests, updated technology, and is brighter and more inviting.

members. That has made a big difference," said Warren.

Stripping the walls down to the studs resulted in a bonus: the discovery of wasted space under a staircase. It's now a small closet where meeting equipment and supplies are stored. Energy efficient lighting replaced the old fluorescent lights, and a separate heating and air conditioning system allows for better airflow and temperature control.

Local business owner Jim Gaddis was impressed with the difference the modifications made.

"I first saw the boardroom while participating in Leadership Jessamine County meetings," said Gaddis. "Frankly, I thought it reflected badly on our community. However, the difference this update made

is like night and day. It's an attractive, comfortable space now."

For Warren, that's what government is all about—a place where people can comfortably participate and share a sense of community pride.



City Hall's lobby was updated with fresh paint, flooring, furnishings and framed prints.

# I-75 Connector Study Progresses. Better Regional Mobility Is Goal

If you want to head east of Nicholasville to I-75 or beyond, you have a few choices – go through Lexington and face heavy traffic, south to Lancaster and go out of your way, or face curvy, substandard country roads. If you're driving a commercial vehicle, your options narrow to two, since commercial trucks aren't allowed on the smaller roads.

It was this lack of east-west mobility that spurred the Nicholasville – I-75 Connector study. The current phase began in 2012 and will continue until a report is submitted to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and the Federal Highway Administration in 2015. Officials in those agencies will decide if a connector route is feasible and prudent or if the option not to build it is better at this time.

Jessamine County Joint Transportation Task Force chair Nancy Stone is pleased with the progress and approach of the study.

“The Transportation Cabinet is going about this project in exactly the right way,” said Stone. “They are involving the community as a whole and going to great lengths to make sure they have information about the potential benefits as well as the possible impacts on the property owners, environment and other resources.”

Stone pointed out that public input is being considered and changes have been made to accommodate people living in the area who would be impacted by one of the possible road alignments.

**“During the most recent Citizens’ Advisory Committee, members agreed that one of the potential alignments for the connector was not desirable because it would pass through Marble Creek, a historic, natural area,” said Stone. “While they must include that alignment in the report, they assured us that they heard us loud and clear.”**



Visit [I-75Connector.com](http://I-75Connector.com) for more details.

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## Nicholasville's Jobs Report Fuels Optimism

Many people see Nicholasville more as a bedroom community than an employment hub, but the reality is that jobs are on the rise. On the local level, hiring is documented in the tax office each time a company hires a new employee to their roster. Since 2007, records show more than 2,700 employees were hired for newly-created jobs.

New businesses created a number of those jobs. Local records show 72 new companies reported hiring since 2007. They represent a broad spectrum of industries, including wholesale and retail trade, service jobs, manufacturing, construction, health care, government, financial, and professional offices.

This diversified employment base helps the community survive an economic downturn better than those that are dependent upon one industry sector. In fact, Nicholasville endured the recent economic

downturn better than many regions of the state and many neighboring counties.

Data, provided by the Kentucky Office of Employment and Training (OET) indicates this county is in the region's top four in terms of employment growth.

"If we look at the OET's numbers from the bottom of the recession in 2009 until May of 2014, the community has done very well," said Jessamine County Joint Economic Development Authority President Wayne Foster. "Employment had a net increase of about 1,350 jobs in the past five years. There were only three counties in central Kentucky that had a greater increase during that period of time."

Additionally, indicators point to continued growth.

"Recent one-on-one visits with many of our local employers, and discussions with exhibitors at industrial trade shows, is fueling optimism that we could see new jobs and investment that exceed national growth," said Foster.



The community does need to continue to plan and invest for the future, as Foster points out that developing a new business park is an immediate challenge.

"Fully-developed and properly-zoned sites in Jessamine County are limited," he said. "The Economic Development Authority is optimistic that a new site will be identified and acquired within the near future."