



Kuna Idaho

2018 State of the City

Presented by

Joe Stear, Mayor

November 15, 2018



Mayor
Joe Stear

**City Council
Members**
Briana Buban-Vonder Haar
Richard Cardoza
Warren Christensen
Greg McPherson



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I will begin, as I do each year with a big *Thank You* to the people that make Kuna the city that it is. We have one of the highest concentrations of military per capita in the treasure valley. It certainly shows in the patriotism that you see here. That is something that we can all take pride in.

I think that one of the things that makes me the proudest is how my directors and staff consistently work together to make up Team Kuna. There is no challenge that we can't overcome when we work together as that team. Growth at the rate that it has been occurring has certainly stretched us thin at times, but when we work together, we can achieve amazing things. When you work as a team it is clear that no one person is any more important than the other. Those that are out there getting their feet dirty are as crucial as the ones that are answering phones and filing reports.

We also get a great deal of help from our citizens as well as our business community. There are many committees and organizations that step up in times of need and prove that we live in a community that really cares. The City relies on community involvement and I'd like to recognize all those who step up for the Planning & Zoning Commission, Kuna Arts Commission, Park Impact Fee Committee, Police Impact Fee Committee, Mayor's Youth Council, Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee, Comp Plan Committee and the Economic Development Committee. The City is all the better for your participation.

Our relationships with the Mayors of the Cities in the Treasure Valley, the Ada County Commissioners, Ada County Highway District Commissioners and the staff members of all of those entities, are key to our success. It is important that we work with our School District, our Fire District and our Sheriff's Department to keep a healthy and safe environment for all.

We do our best to make sure that new growth pays for itself as much as possible. We now have park impact fees, impact fees for fire, and will soon have impact fees for police. As developments occur, we negotiate for trails and safe routes for all the community to use.



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Growth is one of the most talked about issues that we have. It is not only in Kuna but the entire Treasure Valley. Stars City limits tripled in size this past year with one annexation. Our population increased by a little over 5% this last year and it looks like it will be that or more next year. We will continue to listen to the community and develop a Comp Plan that reflects those goals as well as protecting property owners' rights.

We are in good shape with our water and waste water infrastructure. We have capacity for many more hook ups and the ability to expand without having to go out to bond to make that happen. Our expansion of the pressurized irrigation system is working to greatly reduce the need for potable water. The city remains diligent in self-funding those types of infrastructure through growth and mindful planning.

Council remains dedicated to keeping the cities financial position strong while not having to cause any great spikes in the citizens tax bills in any given year. The City continues to be in strong fiscal shape.

A lot of times our citizens come in to testify at public hearings. The developments are approved and they leave with a feeling that Council does not listen. The truth of the matter is that our Council members live in this same community and are bothered by the same things that everyone else is. Council in fact does listen and changes occur because of that testimony. It might not happen on the project that was testified about but changes are made in the long term, where we can, to make future projects better. There has to be legal grounds to deny projects and developers know that and are well versed in the law.

Our comprehensive plan is very close to completion. It has been a very interesting process and I am so pleased with the inclusion of public opinion in this version. I am sure that it will make life much easier for the planning and zoning commission and Council. It has been a long process but will be well worth the effort.

Something that has been a priority for me was to get an Economic Development director on staff. We have done so and I am very excited about the direction that she is taking us. We have submitted several sites around Kuna for various projects considering the Boise Metro region, in the past few months. Many of the companies looking are manufacturing or technology related.

Our partnership with Idaho Power has made it possible for us to create a new Kuna Video. Kody Newton's team from Kuna's own Newtown Productions did an amazing job and this video had over 30,000 views on the weekend that it was launched. This was to showcase our community and we are creating a second video that will show companies why they should invest in Kuna.



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We have worked hard on the comprehensive plan process and are working on an economic development strategic plan that will help us not only to recruit new businesses but to retain existing businesses. Our goal is to meet with existing businesses and work together to better understand the community and work together to meet each other's needs.

We are able to offer a one stop resource when it comes to learning how to do business in Kuna. We can help with site selection, state incentives, research, demographic insights and market analysis.

We will be launching a new entrepreneur's boot camp series to help businesses understand the steps it takes to launch a company. The goal is to help many of our home-based businesses, and provide needed resources to understand legal structure, financing, and how to market ideas.

Some interesting statistics on Kuna are that over 6,000 people drive out of Kuna every day for work. Our population is around 21,000 people and 27,000 people if you include our area of city impact. 11,000 people in our city are in the workforce. Kuna has only 6,179 jobs available. That leaves a gap of 4,983 people that have to leave Kuna every day to go to work. We are looking at the skillset available and trying to focus our job development to fit that need.

We have the only high school in the valley that has an ROTC program focused on the Air Force. We also have the first STEM charter school that opened this year. Kuna will be launching a new high school in the next couple of years that will focus on technical tracks for students.

We did increase our police budget this year to help to get us to our 1 officer per 1,000 residents, goal. Not there yet but are getting ever closer at 0.83. We continue to be able to offer police service for about \$100 per resident which is about half of what the cities pay that have a standalone police department. Last year we started bringing on school SRO's (student resource officers) in the summer months. That was very successful in helping with the youth because they already have built relationships with each other.

I am very pleased with our officers and the way that they work with the young people in our community. They make the time to relate to them and it is obvious that they have a deep concern for the welfare of our youth. Our officers are very passionate about keeping the kids out of the cycles that put them in the court system.

Their code 3 responses or high priority calls have gone from an average of 3 minutes 26 seconds down to 3 minutes 17 seconds. That is not a huge reduction



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but every second counts in an emergency. Last year's calls for service were 27.3 calls per thousand residents and if we stay on course this year will be 25.4 calls per thousand residents. This is good because even though we grew by a little over 5% in population crime is down by 4%.

We are still working on securing grants. Downtown phase 2 is well in the works and funding is being secured now. We won a third award for the downtown project. The City Achievement Award from the Association of Idaho Cities. This is due in large part to not only the team that made this project happen, but the citizens that participated in the design.

We have been working on more events in the city to provide entertainment as well as community engagement on a more regular basis. We have of course my favorites, Popsicles with the Mayor where we have a water slide and of course popsicles. Candy Canes with the Mayor where we have coloring activities, Santa and of course candy canes. Q&A sessions several times a year where youth can come in and ask me questions. The Down and Dirty, all I need to say about that is, obstacle course and mud.

Fishin' With the Commission, that one is actually sponsored by our Ada County Commissioners but it is a great time to interact with kids of all ages. Mayors book club that is put on by the library and sponsored by local businesses and citizens. Movies on the Greenbelt, a great selection of movies that we show every Friday night throughout the summer, right out back of City Hall on the green belt. Music on the green belt was another great new addition this year where we had 3 bands that entertained people while they relaxed on the grass or participated in a Cornhole tournament. And then bringing back a version of the Kuna Days street dance out back and providing a great place to watch the fireworks show.

As we prepare for 2019, you will see a calendar showing up in your mail boxes to continue to keep the community updated on the meetings and happenings in our town. You will also see updates to our website to make it more informative and user friendly. The Parks department will continue their quality efforts to create greenspaces and amenities and open the splash pad. As always, City Hall with the Clerk's Office & Utility Billing will be your go to for questions and resources, the Public Works Department will keep our services available and compliant, Planning & Zoning will keep pace with ongoing development, Economic Development will work to grow our business community, Council will continue to represent their community members to the best of their ability and as your Mayor, I will continue to keep Kuna in the forefront of valley and regional partnerships, maintain an open door policy, reach out to the children of our community as our future leaders and appreciate that Kuna is our home town.

As I close out the State of the City for 2018, please join me in watching our new Kuna Video and enjoy refreshments following.



MAYOR
JOE STEAR
presents
2018
STATE OF
THE CITY



2017 Kuna Holiday Artist & Crafter Show
A Kuna Arts Commission & Downtown Revitalization Event



**New Christmas
Decorations for
Bernie Fisher Park
& Annual Christmas
Tree Lighting**

**Candy Canes with the
Mayor 2017**



**Treasure Valley Partnership Meeting
January 29, 2018**



**Southwest Idaho
Regional Cultural
Partnership Meeting
May 2018**

"Strengthening
connections and
increasing cooperation
to build cultural
infrastructure."



A Kuna Arts Commission Event



Hubbard Elementary 1st Grade Field Trip



"You have brakes in your
head. You have feet in your
shoes. You can steer yourself
any direction you choose."
- Dr. Seuss

**Planting Pumpkin
Seeds with
Kuna Middle
School Extended
Resource Group &
Kuna Parks & Rec**



The City brought on an Economic Development Director which
brings us:

- Providing excellent customer service
- Promoting investment and cooperation
- Small business events
- Marketing and economic incentives for all current and future
businesses that call Kuna home.

Community



Downtown Revitalization Phase 1 Completed



- Sidewalk Improvements
- Avenue C to Avenue A
- Increase Safety
- Improve ADA Accessibility
- Contact Issues with
Utility/Club/Guilds

**Downtown Revitalization
Main Street Project: Phase 2**



**Park
Improvements**

Kuna Parks & Rec & Merion Youth Council Archery Tag for Future Commissioners



Overlook Boats for Awareness in partnership with the Kuna Area Government & Kuna Parks & Rec



Splash Pad



POPSICLES with the MAYOR

June 21, 2018
Photos donated by Tracy G.

Kuna Rangers Program Kuna Parks & Rec



Kuna Parks & Rec Rangers Program Archery Day with



Kuna Parks & Rec Rangers Program Boat Safety Day with Ada County Sheriff's Office

Kuna Parks & Rec Rangers Program and Department of Fish & Game Summer Fishing Day



4TH ANNUAL DOWN N' DIRTY YOUTH MUD RUN 2018 KUNA DAYS

AIC City Achievement Award Downtown Revitalization Project Phase 1



*Creative ~ Innovative ~ Cost Saving
Solution Oriented ~ Resourceful*

MAYORS TABLE

An annual September Community Event hosted by Mayor and Mrs. Stear, City of Kuna and the Kuna Farmers Market.



2018 Youth Q & A With Mayor Stear

Bi-Monthly Event



National Walk to School Day



- Encouraging kids and the community to get active.
- Offering environmentally friendly alternatives.
- Promoting safer routes to schools and Safety Education.
- Connecting friends & neighbors.

