The City of Johnson City operates as a home rule municipality and is governed by the City Manager-Commission form of government. The Board of Commissioners is the governing body of the City of Johnson City. Commissioners are elected at large for four-year staggered terms. Commissioners select the mayor from among their group following each election. The mayor serves as the ceremonial head of the City, presides over City Commission meetings, and represents the City of Johnson City at a variety of community and public functions. The Board of Commissioners hires a professional city manager to manage and direct day-to-day operations of city government. City commissioners participate in a variety of boards, commission and committees. Their involvement provides an important link between citizens, businesses, non-profits and municipal government.

The City Commission ensures the provision of community services the people of Johnson City need and want.

In carrying out its duties, the City Commission must address citizens’ concerns while planning for the community’s long-term growth and development. To this end, it is the responsibility of the City Commission to oversee costs and be as efficient as possible while managing the City’s infrastructure projects and investments.
The Fiscal Year 2018 budget was based upon incoming revenues totaling $89,955,808.
The Fiscal Year 2018 budget included expenditures for all funds, totaling $88,370,618. This chart excludes the General Purpose School Fund budget of $72,031,572.
The Public Works Department provides a variety of services intended to maintain the health, safety, and welfare of the community, as well as enhance quality of life. The department consists of five major divisions: Engineering, Solid Waste, Stormwater, Streets, and Traffic.

Some of the most high profile projects completed by Public Works in Fiscal Year 2018 include the completion of King Commons and related improvements to King and Commerce streets. Other significant street work included the construction of the city’s first traffic circle at the intersection of Mountainview and Browns Mill roads and the expansions of the I-26 and University Parkway interchange as well as the intersection of Indian Ridge and State of Franklin roads.

Other accomplishments of the Johnson City Public Works Department during FY 2018 include the following improvements/enhancements:

TRAILS / SIDEWALKS
• Innovation Park and VA trail extension
• Highland Avenue from Founders Park to Watauga Avenue
• Sunset Drive from Sundale Road to Roan Street
TRANSPORTATION
- 9th Avenue improvements – Roan Street to Welbourne Street
- Marshall Court cul-de-sac
- Knob Creek Road/Sunset Drive intersection
- Commerce Street from Market Street to Roan Street
- King Street from Roan Street to Boone Street
- Boone Street from Main Street to Watauga Avenue
- Highland Avenue from Watauga Avenue to Whitney Street
- I-26/University Parkway interchange
- Indian Ridge Road/State of Franklin Road intersection

PARKING LOTS
- City Hall
- Salvation Army
- Tweetsie Trail
- Columbus Powell School Administration
- Henry Johnson School
- Fire Station No. 4
Water and Sewer Services operates infrastructure inside the city limits and in portions of four counties outside the City limits. Each year, the department treats 5.6 billion gallons of potable water and processes over 5 billion gallons of wastewater. Over the years, Water and Sewer Services has been recognized at the local, state, regional and national levels for its commitment to excellence in operations and protection of the environment. This fiscal year the department received awards from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies and the Kentucky/Tennessee American Water Works Association. The City’s drinking water consistently surpasses state and federal guidelines. The 2017 Water Quality Report can be found here.

The department’s regular operations include ensuring compliance with all drinking water standards as well as all wastewater plant discharge permits. Staff continue to engage various programs for the maintenance of water and sewer infrastructure. In FY 2018, staff procured and utilized the City’s first hydro-excavation unit for water lateral replacement and utility line locating. The department also conducted the first trial of web-based water meter readings for large water users and enhanced its efforts to locate and repair non-visible water leaks.
In addition to daily operations, the Water and Sewer Services capital project delivery included:

- Renovation and replacement of treatment processes at the Brush Creek and Knob Creek wastewater treatment plants.
- Replacement of the Bunker Hill Water Tank in the Chinquapin section of water service area.
- Replacement of old water lines and installation of hydrants in the Gump Addition.
- Demolition of the Tannery Knob Water Tank built in the early 1940s and preparation of the foundation for the new 5 million gallon water storage reservoir.
- Sanitary sewer project phasing our wastewater lift stations with gravity service along East Lakeview Drive and also East Carroll Creek Road.
- Sanitary sewer rehabilitation of lines along Upper King Creek and Division Street corridor.
- Installation of two standby generators to reduce the potential for sewer overflows during power outages.
- Implementation of new asset management software and field mobility allowing work crews to receive customer request via iPads and providing them access to real-time information on the location and type of pipes throughout our system.
- Commencement of Austin Spring Road Water Line Replacement project replacing old pipe with 12-inch line and improving water quality and available flow to hydrants.
- Commencement of a joint project with Washington County to extend water service to an unserved area of Ford Creek Road.
The Johnson City Fire Department is a full-time career department serving more than 67,000 city residents, nearly 15,000 East Tennessee State University students, more than 400 Veterans Affairs-Mountain Home residents, and thousands of daily commuters. The department has 130 members, 108 of whom are dedicated to fire suppression, Haz-Mat, and medical first response operations. The department operates three shifts with approximately 39 firefighters working per 24-hour shift. Firefighters respond from nine fire stations, operating nine pumpers, three ladder trucks, and two district chief command vehicles.
In 2018, the department responded to 3,819 fire calls and 6,355 emergency medical services calls. This is an increase of 9.6 percent for fire calls and an increase of 3.7 percent for emergency medical calls. The average fire turnout time was 70 seconds, which is 10 seconds less than the national average according to the National Fire Protection Association codes and standards. The department’s overall average response time was 5:04 minutes, which is just over the target average response time of five minutes or less.
Each day, approximately 150 sworn officers provide law enforcement service to the citizens and visitors of Johnson City. Additionally, 27 civilian employees serve the public in records, administrative, and support functions. Accredited in 1993 through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, the Johnson City Police Department has continuously maintained its accreditation by meeting that organization’s rigorous standards. In addition, the department received accredited status through the Tennessee Law Enforcement Accreditation Program in 2011. The Police Department, with its dedicated and well-trained workforce, is committed to providing quality service to the community through progressive programs, innovative technologies, and responsible policing. The department is constantly looking for ways to improve its service to the public. In Fiscal Year 2018, the department shaved 18 seconds off of last year’s average response time, taking it from 4:21 minutes to 4:03.
Johnson City saw a reduction of 2.5 percent in the crime rate in Fiscal Year 2018. During this same time period, the department had a Part I crime clearance rate of 64.4 percent, which is significantly higher than the state (29.5 percent) and national (32 percent) averages. Part I crimes include violent crimes of homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault as well as the property crimes of arson, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft. The Johnson City Police Department cleared 83.9 percent of all Part I violent crimes and 44.9 percent of all Part I property crimes, which also exceeded the state and national averages.

The department recognizes that traffic enforcement and education are key to reducing traffic crashes and their related injuries. Officers worked diligently during the fiscal year to inform and educate the public on speed, occupant protection, and distracted or impaired driving. The Police Department is continually implementing new strategies to improve the safety of city roadways for its citizens. Officers conducted child safety seat checks, DUI saturation patrols, and other traffic safety programs throughout the year. Johnson City saw a significant decrease in traffic fatalities during Fiscal Year 2018 with only one recorded compared to five in FY 2017.
Development Services saw growth in development as a whole in 2018. This department approved five citizen-requested annexations and 11 new subdivisions.

During Fiscal Year 2018, Johnson City’s Development Services Planning Division in conjunction with the Historic Zoning Commission continued to engage the downtown historic district merchants. The goal of the Historic Zoning Commission, supported by the downtown merchants, is to have a consistent standard throughout the area — one that entices people to shop, eat and socialize.

Other accomplishments of Development Services include the continued development of the West Walnut Corridor District and the beginning of its master plan to chart the course for a more attractive, economically successful, vibrant, and safe corridor. The core motivation for this project is to enhance this area of downtown Johnson City while creating a more pedestrian and bike friendly environment for citizens and East Tennessee State University students.
PARKS AND RECREATION

The department operates 24 parks, one multigenerational community center and four recreation centers, four indoor basketball courts, two mountain bike parks, 23 lighted tennis courts, one dog park, six swimming pools, 17 play structures, one boardwalk and lakefront special-use area, two boat ramps, two amphitheaters, six sand volleyball courts, 30 picnic shelters, about 20 miles of hiking/walking trails, one football stadium, one baseball stadium, one skateboard park, one historic cabin, one tree arboretum, five multi-use athletic fields, 10 youth baseball fields, 10 softball fields, 12 soccer fields, one 18-hole golf course, one 18-hole disc golf course, one splash park, 10 pickleball courts and other special use facilities on more than 1,150 acres.

The Parks and Recreation Department has expanded services and programs throughout its lengthy history to serve Johnson City’s growing population. The department is committed to enhancing community well-being by providing responsive recreation opportunities, quality open space and preservation of natural habitats, and innovation in all aspects of service operation.

The Lakeside Concert Series, held during the summer at Winged Deer Park, consisted of 10 concerts featuring a variety of musical genres including country, rock and beach music with 3,876 attendees throughout the series. During Fiscal Year 2018, the City purchased 36 acres adjacent to Winged Deer Park that will be used to build new athletic fields. This will enhance the services provided to citizens and allow the city to host additional athletic tournaments for an increased economic impact.

Athletic field improvements during FY 18 included extensive top dressing, irrigation improvements, and seeding and sodding of rectangular fields located at Civitan and Winged Deer parks.

Other work completed includes:

- Construction of a permanent restroom facility at Rotary Park’s Gump Pavilion, providing restroom access on the Oakland Avenue side of the park.
- Construction of a new playground at Carver Recreation Center.
- Major repairs to the Chief Junaluska statue located at Metro-Kiwanis Park by its original artist, Peter Wolf Toth, who created the piece 32 years ago.
- Construction of a new playground at Metro-Kiwanis Park.
- Completion of new arboretum signage for the 30 trees in Jacob’s Nature Park at Sinking Creek. The individual signs include codes that direct smartphone users to a “Plants Map” link, on which visitors can identify each tree by its scientific and common names, as well as the butterfly and/or moth species supported by the tree type.
- Installation of new infield and outfield lighting as well as bleacher seats at Cardinal Park.
The Parks and Recreation Department began a new park rehabilitation initiative in Fiscal Year 2018. One park is selected at a time to receive general repairs, painting and landscape work. Lions Park was the initial recipient of this work. This will be an ongoing process until all parks are completed.

The department’s online registration program continues to provide citizens the convenience of registering via their desktop, laptop, tablet or smart phone, thus eliminating the need to travel to Winged Deer Park for signups. In addition, it provides staff the tools to group the participants by gender, age, and geographic location. During FY 18, 68 percent all of athletic registrations were processed online, surpassing the department goal of 65 percent. The department uses a similar system for reservation of park properties. Nearly 1,000 reservations were made in FY 2018 by citizens to reserve picnic pavilions, gymnasiums, meeting rooms and other facilities.

In 2018, the City received a Local Park and Recreation Fund grant in the amount of $200,000 for the construction of a new splash pad at Carver Recreation Center. Additionally, Buffalo Valley Golf Course closed, and Pine Oaks Golf Course was moved from an enterprise fund into the City’s general fund budget. A total of 23,701 rounds of golf were played at Pine Oaks Golf Course during FY 2018.
Juvenile Court conducted hearings involving 1,706 children on issues ranging from severe child abuse to traffic violations. Children younger than 10 years old made up one-third of the referrals to Juvenile Court.

During the year, the youth before Juvenile Court on delinquent offenses successfully completed almost 3,000 hours of community service hours at non-profit organizations in the Johnson City area.

Judge Sharon Green was honored by Neighborhood Reconciliation Services, a nonprofit organization in Johnson City, for Juvenile Court’s work in using restorative justice principles for youth charged with delinquent offenses.
The Purchasing Department processed approximately $38 million in contracts for goods and services. In addition, the department realized $379,000 in net proceeds from surplus vehicle/equipment sales. A new online bidding/vendor registration system was rolled out in 2018. The procurement staff have each received National Certified Professional Public Buyer certification.
The Information Technology Department supports City departments in accomplishing their missions through the use of technology tools. In Fiscal Year 2018, the department completed several significant upgrades (Exchange Server 2010 to Exchange Server 2016 and 2008 Domain Controllers to 2016 Domain Controllers). Also of significance, the department added 17TB of raw storage to SAN in the Datacenter. The department installed the Zscaler Zero Day Cloud Based Internet Filter to mitigate malware, ransomware, and viruses from internet.

The Geospatial Division of Information Technology specializes in delivering business intelligence to empower the City through spatial data. Much more than just map-makers, this group manages more than 335 different “layers” of information about Johnson City infrastructure that are used to put problems into a geographic context for better understanding.

In the last two years, this program has seen a top-to-bottom restructuring to take advantage of significant advances in geospatial technology over the web and to supply data to two major enterprise applications: CityView for planning.
permitting, and code enforcement, and Cartegraph for work order management. Well over 250 City employees now use these applications on a daily basis.

City employees also have a geospatial portal that allows them access to centrally stored mapping data. By empowering staff to create their own maps and analysis, the Geospatial Division serves as a conduit for the most information available.

More than one dozen web-mapping applications have been developed for citizens to browse the City’s data. They feature information about property ownership, trash pickup, school zones, aerial imagery, the Tweetsie Trail, and much more. These apps and dashboards are prominently featured on the City’s website.

In 2018, the City took a significant step forward by establishing a program for unmanned aerial vehicle ("drone") use. This policy governs the use of drones by City employees and is supplemental to the license that pilots must obtain from the Federal Aviation Administration. Johnson City Police Department provides the administrative home for this program while the Geospatial Division of Information Technology is responsible for processing the imagery and making it available. The City has one drone and two pilots. To date, there have been over two dozen missions flown to gather aerial imagery for the mapping program and for emergency responses.
The Facilities Management Department completed 1,015 work orders for City facilities in Fiscal Year 2018. In addition, the department was involved in three major projects:

Langston High School Renovations:
The original Langston High School was constructed in 1893 at 224 E. Myrtle Ave., at the corner of Myrtle Avenue and Elm Street in Johnson City. It was named in honor of U.S. Congressman John Mercer Langston, one of the first African-Americans elected to public office in the United States. Langston High School served African-American schoolchildren in Johnson City until court-ordered desegregation in 1965, when most students relocated to Science Hill High School.

Soon after Langston students and staff left the facility, it became the city-wide vocational school, serving in that capacity until the new vocational school (now known as the Career Technical Center) opened on the campus of Science Hill High around 1974. After the vocational school relocation, Langston became home to the City’s Schools Maintenance department.

In 2016, the City of Johnson City began working with the Langston Education and Arts Development (LEAD) to preserve...
the campus of Langston High School as a reflection of its cultural relevance and historical significance. A $2.3 million renovation and addition began in 2018. The project is scheduled to be completed and the facility opened to the public as a multicultural community center for education and art programs in 2019.

Liberty Bell Middle School Cafeteria/Gymnasium Addition:

This 40,000-square-foot addition will provide a school-connected cafeteria with a seating capacity of 350 students and a gymnasium with bleacher seating capacity of 1,300 spectators. The new addition also includes a state-of-the-art commercial kitchen facility, locker rooms for boys and girls sports and physical education needs, and much needed storage space.

The $9.6 million project kicked off with an official groundbreaking ceremony in October 2018 and construction is scheduled to be ready for students in fall 2020.

Johnson City Police Training Facility:

Site construction began in August 2018 to replace a facility that had reached the end of its useful life. The new facility is about 6,000 square feet and houses a large training room, office space and equipment storage space. The $1.05 million facility is designed to last well over 50 years. The new space will provide a modern, safe, and functional facility for the internal, joint and public training exercises required by our police force. The building is expected to be completed by fall 2019.
During Fiscal Year 2018, the City welcomed 136,000 people to programs at Freedom Hall. The venue hosted 20 ticketed performances including two new events, Paw Patrol and the Will Graham Celebration, with an estimated total attendance of more than 50,000. Freedom Hall also hosted 16 ETSU men’s basketball games with an estimated total attendance of more than 40,000.

Freedom Hall saw a number of improvements made to its building and interior design. These included the installation of new floor surfaces in the inner walkway, the outer concourse walkway, and the concession stands. Additionally, the concession stands and box office window received new countertops and fascia. A new fire alarm system was installed throughout the facility. Cleaning, repairs and painting were completed in the boys and girls school dressing rooms with old, unused equipment removed as well.
The mission of Johnson City Schools is to enable all students to achieve excellence in learning, social responsibility and self-worth. Employees and students are inspired daily by the motto “Expect the Best!” Fiscal Year 2018 was a testament to that with five schools receiving the Tennessee Department of Education’s highest distinction of Reward Schools. In addition, seven schools were recognized for their Level 5 Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) scores. Our district was one of 11 school districts in the state to score a level five in all subject-area TVAAS composite scores.

Board of Education member Dr. Richard Manahan achieved Level V Boardsmanship and was awarded membership into the Tennessee School Boards Association’s “Scholars Circle” at the TSBA conference in November. At the same conference, Board of Education member Kathy Hall was named the 2017 Tennessee School Board Member of the Year, receiving the C. Hal Henard Distinguished Service Awards. In addition, the Tennessee P.T.A. selected School Board member Tom Hager as “2018 Outstanding School Board Member.”

Several of the City’s schoolteachers were also honored for their work in the classroom. South Side Elementary teacher Nancy Miles was selected as the 2017 “Teacher of the Year” for the East Grand
Division. Mountain View Elementary teacher Amy Ford was selected as a finalist for Science Educator of the Year by the Tennessee Science Teachers Association. Indian Trail Intermediate teacher Misty Davis was selected as a Teacher of the Year Region-level finalist for the First TN region.

Our high school students scored an average of 22.3 on the ACT exam, making our district one of eight schools in Tennessee to finish with an average above 22. Five seniors were selected as 2017-2018 National Merit Finalists.

In addition to the academic accomplishments, our student-athletes were also successful in their respective sports with many of the teams earning district, regional and state championships. Boys wrestling coach Jimmy Miller was named 2018 Tennessee Head Wrestling Coach of the Year by the National Wrestling Coaches Association after leading the Toppers to their best finish in school history with a TSSAA State Dual Runner-up finish. Science Hill High School also saw students earn district, region and state championships in technical fields. The graduating class of 2018 completed more than 46,000 hours of community service.

During this fiscal year, Johnson City Schools broke ground on a new cafeteria and gymnasium at Liberty Bell Middle School. This project will remove Liberty Bell’s day-to-day activities from Freedom Hall Civic Center. It also serves as the cornerstone project of creating two 5-8 middle schools for the district, providing more opportunities for all students in Johnson City.
In Fiscal Year 2018, Community Relations transitioned to the Communications and Marketing Department to better reflect its focus on strategic communications and to also include the marketing aspect of operations brought about by the City’s new branding initiative. The branding process began in November 2017 and included six months of in-depth research, input and data collection that has since been compiled into a report that will serve as a starting point for the City’s strategic plan.

A digital communications manager was brought on board to enhance service delivery of communications through photo, video, social media, and interactive publications. Social media posts exceeded 260 in FY 2018, and the department issued more than 460 news releases/informational pieces. In conjunction with Information Technology, Communications and Marketing also commenced a complete redesign of the City’s website and implementation of a new GIS-based citizen reporting app.

The department also supported positive citizen engagement through events like JC 101, Party in the Park, Turkey Trot, and a community Christmas Tree Lighting that tripled in attendance from the previous, inaugural year.
Dr. Ralph Van Brocklin moved to Johnson City in 1985 to begin his oral surgery practice. What he found in East Tennessee - the beauty of the mountains, changing of the seasons, and friendliness of the people - made him realize he had chosen the right place to live, practice and raise a family.

He learned at an early age the values of education, resourcefulness and hard work, as well as the satisfaction that comes through service to others. Always willing to serve his community, he was elected to the Johnson City Board of Education in 2007, working for the improvement of our public schools. In 2011, he was elected to the Johnson City Board of Commissioners, serving as Mayor from 2013-2015. Being elected to a second term on the Commission, Dr. Van Brocklin was always looking ahead, planting seeds for the future in our schools and in our city, with particular focus on community beautification, economic development and education.

He worked on numerous initiatives during his time in public office, including the revitalization of downtown Johnson City, the new Washington County-Johnson City Animal Shelter, the East Tennessee State University Performing Arts Center, and the Tweetsie Trail. His boot prints will be seen for years to come, as he has been instrumental in changing the landscape of the adopted city he loved so much.

Dr. Ralph Van Brocklin
March 9, 1955 - September 8, 2018