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# Message from the Mayor

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As I settle in to write this message, a few things come to mind. First, it's the end of July, which means we are gearing up to welcome the students back for what we hope will be an amazing year. However, before they arrive on campus, Clemson University will host August graduation and the ceremony will return to Clemson for the first time since the pandemic started. And finally, energy-filled football weekends will be back in less than two months! There is no doubt that Clemson – the City – is most vibrant and productive when Clemson – the University – is in session.

As we look to this new academic year, we acknowledge that our Town/Gown relationship without a doubt needs work. Better communication and a united vision are essential to enable balanced growth. A meaningful partnership marked by true transparency between the City and University is the only way we can move forward in a manner that benefits the entire community. Tense moments always come in times of change, but as we navigate through some of the difficult times, we should also remember to enjoy the positives of living in a college community. The University brings energetic youth, access to an incredible campus and unmatched entertainment in sports and arts, and financial security for many of our community business owners, just to name a few.

In June, City Council officially announced the permanent appointment of Andy Blondeau as City Administrator. Mr. Blondeau was unanimously approved for the position after a four month search. He had been serving as interim city administrator since the beginning of 2020 and guided the city in unparalleled times, navigating the ever changing landscape of a pandemic and advising the ClemsonNext committee, in addition to all the regular responsibilities of both Administrator and Assistant Administrator. We are excited to see Andy lead our City and integrate our mission and vision for years to come.

Our “Outside on the Ave” events encouraging outside dining, providing live music, and promoting family fun in downtown Clemson were a great success this summer. These events were so successful that plans are in development for a similar series of events this Fall at Patrick Square called Rock the Block. These events are an opportunity for residents and students to enjoy our community together. Plan to join us downtown again on Sept 4th to watch our Tigers take on the Georgia Bulldogs. College Ave will be closed to traffic and the game will be shown on the Bigscreen.

As always, I want to hear from you! I use social media as a way to distribute information but never as a catalyst for conversation. Call me! I am happy to sit down over a cup of coffee. Let's Talk!

