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NEWS RELEASE

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McAlester city tax revenue showed growth during 2019 fiscal year

The City of McAlester ended fiscal year 2019 more than \$1.5 million – or 10% - over the previous year. The increase in revenue is due to a surge in retail sales for the year as well as new revenue from taxes approved by voters in February 2018.

The city's fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30. Figures from the City of McAlester show 2019 retail sales data at \$416 million, up almost seven percent from \$389 million this time last year. "Sales tax collections are always a good indicator that the economy is growing," said City Manager Pete Stasiak. "When our citizens are earning more, they feel more comfortable spending and we are glad to see people choosing to spend their money in businesses here in McAlester." Stasiak went on to point out that the increase is occurring across all sectors – restaurants, grocery, hotel tax, and general retail.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national unemployment rate in May 2019 was 3.6% while Oklahoma's rate was at 3.2%. The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission lists Pittsburg County at 3.1%. "Local business and industry continue to grow and add jobs to our community. Over the past several years, we've tracked more than 1,000 jobs created across several major employers including McAAP, Spirit AeroSystems, Tucker / STEP Energy, Krebs Brewing Company, and Choctaw Defense. As our market further develops, we can expect even more good-paying and stable job opportunities to arise," said Economic Development Director Kirk Ridenour.

Some decline did occur in the McAlester Public Works Authority funds. Based largely on water sales, city leaders attribute the decline to the abnormally wet conditions. "Anytime there is a lot of rain, people use less to water their yards and meet the demands in their homes and businesses," said Stasiak.

When possible, the City leverages its limited resources with other partners to create greater impacts on the community. Thanks to partners such as the Puterbaugh Foundation, The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Strategic Military Planning Commission, the Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Small Business Administration and more, the City of McAlester received more than \$5,000,000 in grants and partnership dollars over the past several years.

For more information, please visit the City of McAlester website at www.cityofmcalester.com.