

2023 State of the City Address

Hello! I'm so happy to see all of you!

Thank you for being here with me tonight and thanks to members of the Salt Lake City Council for joining us.

I'm thrilled to be here with you tonight to share the exciting progress we've made for Salt Lake City.

And how great is it to be here, together?

The last time we held State of the City in person, Woodbine food hall didn't yet exist. In fact, in February of 2020, so much of the Granary District — where we're gathered tonight — was still waiting to be reimaged.

Three years ago you'd have found yourself in a quieter, lower-profile part of our city than it is today. Rico's, here, and Safe Haven, across the street, were early-in lifeblood, beginning what has now become a more vibrant and active neighborhood, surrounded by a growing community of businesses, restaurants and nightlife that also contribute to the very pulse of our city.

Buildings that have been here for decades, in the heart of one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, being reinvented for our community to rediscover and enjoy anew.

From Mozz Artisan Pizza, to 3 Cups Coffee, to the Taste of Louisiana, owner Max Coreth and local chef Zach Howa are bringing this space to life, fostering entrepreneurs in search of a foundation to grow their business.

Woodbine... The Granary... this space is emblematic of our *city* - a place that is really no stranger to reinvention and evolution. A place that grows with, and for the needs of its community. A place that continues to change, while underneath it all it, staying true to itself as the city we've always known and loved.

I am proud of you, Salt Lake City, and what we've accomplished together.

What an undeniably exciting time of possibility and potential for our city.

Downtown Salt Lake City has not only recovered from the pandemic, but is more alive and energetic than ever. Based on visitation to shops, restaurants, offices and parks, it has recovered better than any other downtown in the country.

Having our city powered by net-zero renewable energy is right on the horizon for us, as well as more than a dozen cities across the state thanks to first-of-their-kind partnerships that we forged!

The biggest stars in the NBA will be playing in *our* front yard next month, bringing with them more than \$40 million in economic impact and another opportunity to show the world Salt Lake City.

Instead of moving on from Outdoor Retailer and its \$46 million annual investment in our region, we worked together, showcased our city's unrelenting commitment to environmental stewardship, and we won them back for new shows that started this month.

And, if you ask me... we're on the right track for being able to say we're getting another well-known winter sports event to come back to our city in 2030 or 2034.

Just this month, we embarked on an historic journey with Delta Air Lines. I want to thank their team for flying in from Atlanta to be here tonight.

Our historic new Use Agreement with Delta will mean Salt Lake City will remain Delta's workhorse in the West through at least 2044.

Salt Lake City is the fastest-growing hub for Delta nationwide and their \$3 billion in commitments prove their dedication to this market. They are a key partner for our new airport, which will see an additional five gates open this May and 17 new gates open in November.

And that walk to Concourse B is on track to get a whole lot shorter.

If the work and outcomes of the last year and beyond have taught us anything, it's that Salt Lake City is in a constant forward motion, and there's just no looking back.

How we rise to the opportunities and challenges of the next *five years* can chart our course for the next *century* and set in motion a future that is bright for generations to come.

I've said it before and it's worth stating again, the character of this city isn't created through the successes and challenges we face together — it's revealed. That character is powerful, creative, tenacious, and caring. There's no stopping us. We are bold. We are courageous. We are Salt Lakers, and we are ready.

The State of our City is ready.

We have a truly incredible team of public servants who work for the people of Salt Lake City. It would take hours to provide updates on all the impressive things they have accomplished for this city, many of which you can now check out in our annual report card, released yesterday. But, once an air-quality advocate, *always* an air-quality advocate, so I'm excited to share an update on some of the city's exciting work to improve our air quality and our incredible parks.

Reducing and eliminating our dependence on fossil fuels is an absolutely essential component of our work to improve the air we breathe and fight climate change.

Did you know, one *hour* operating a gas-powered lawn mower produces the same pollution as driving a state-of-the-art car *45 miles*?

Last year alone we swapped out ****539** gas-powered mowers. We partnered and found a way to expand access to the state's trade-in program. That partnership has *quadrupled* the number of city residents able to trade in their polluting lawn mower for a clean electric model, at no cost to them.

The Free Fare February program my administration developed with UTA last year was so successful that Governor Cox has proposed a year-long pilot program. That's a huge development.

Someday we'll have Free Fare Forever, but Free Fares For 10 days around the upcoming All-Star Game next month isn't bad, and we're grateful for our partners at UTA.

I'm also a firm believer in leading by example, and one of the ways our city can do that is by shifting the electricity used by the city government to clean, renewable sources. In 2021, Salt Lake City forged a partnership to build an 80-megawatt solar farm in Tooele County, which will generate enough electricity to power 80 percent of the government's usage.

I am happy to report that construction is well underway — the frames and brackets have been installed. I'm excited to see this project come together as quickly as possible.

Even bigger than that — much bigger — is the project that will deliver net-100% clean, renewable energy to every energy consumer in Salt Lake City by 2030.

For years, we expected that Salt Lake City would start receiving *all* of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030. But in 2021, we found out that this might be pushed out another 20 years.

We responded by negotiating a nationally unprecedented partnership with 14 other local governments *and* Rocky Mountain Power to form a brand-new cooperative agency that will bring net-100 percent renewable electricity to every home, every business — every energy consumer in the city. The Community Renewable Energy Agency will make it possible for everyone in Salt Lake City to eliminate their dependence on energy from fossil fuels by 2030 or before.

After months of legal and logistical work, we're on track to go before the Utah Public Service Commission in March and could have rate structure approval as early as June.

For *this* air-quality advocate, it's really exciting progress.

Since cars and trucks driving on our roads are still the greatest contributor to the valley's air pollution, accelerating the widespread transition from gas-powered to clean-electric-powered vehicles is mission-critical for our city.

The city is continuing its expansion of electric-vehicle infrastructure both at public and private locations. Demand is growing so quickly now — it's incredible. Usage of the city's EV ports has gone up by 68 percent in just three years!

The city granted permits for EV ports at homes and businesses at a rate of more than one per day last year and my administration has proposed an ordinance that would require builders of new apartments and condo buildings to ensure 20 percent of their parking stalls are ready for the wiring for EV ports in the future. I am optimistic the Council will approve that measure soon.

When I ran for this job I promised that our taxpayers *alone* would not pay for the city's growth, and that we would pursue new funding sources to help fuel our growth. This is happening in many ways, one being to help grow our EV infrastructure.

The city applied for and won funding from Rocky Mountain Power to install three new EV stations to be installed on 2nd South this year.

We've also analyzed other public sites around the city — libraries, parks, offices — to consider where the next round of city-owned stations should go. That work will form the basis for hundreds of thousands of dollars in federal funding we'll apply for in the next few months to help subsidize our EV network.

We've already identified 20 potential new station-locations with capacity for 75 more charging ports. We're going to *keep working* to make Salt Lake City the friendliest city in the state for clean electric vehicles.

Our ongoing work to improve our air quality also includes the now-3,000 additional trees we have planted in West side neighborhoods over the last three years. Those trees are about so much more than beautification, *and* about more than heat reduction. Those trees are growing up to serve on the front line of our war on pollution.

Each tree will grow to generate half a million pounds of new oxygen and take 20,000 pounds of pollution out of the air *each year*, right in the neighborhoods that need it the most.

If we don't take proactive, ambitious actions to strengthen our environment, we risk losing its benefits and protections.

In November, voters resoundingly approved an \$85 million bond to pay for improvements to our parks and green spaces in every Council district in the City — to make transformational investments that will be felt for generations — and to create the first *ever* regional park on the West side.

Tonight, I'm happy to report that construction on the first phase of Glendale Park will begin by this fall.

As we have grown from a 12-hour city to an 18-hour city over the last decade, we have not been immune to serious challenges common to major cities across the world, least of all crime.

As mayor, I have no greater responsibility than keeping people safe, and fighting crime will always be a critical focus for my administration.

In my weekly meetings with Police Chief Mike Brown, my top priority is always ensuring that our data-driven strategy is putting our public safety resources where they are needed most. Our officers need to be where they can do the most good as we build our *civilian* capacity to handle calls for service that don't require sworn officers.

Our officers, 911 dispatchers, and firefighters have embraced new training on engaging with those with invisible disabilities. The impact of their work is saving lives, bringing more de-escalation to dangerous situations, and a growing understanding of those we serve. I'm so proud of our 911, Fire and Police Departments dedication to serve and evolve with our growing city.

As it did across the nation, crime in Salt Lake City peaked during the height of the pandemic. But unlike so many other major cities, I'm proud to say that our citywide crime levels have come down by more than 12 percent since that point.

That number is the direct result of our department leading out with some of the most innovative and positively impactful policing tactics. Our officers are pulling extra shifts to ensure we have enough officers on patrol, and our shift to Stratified Policing — or what we call Hot Spot Intervention — has led to a 23% reduction in violent street crime in those identified areas, compared to the same time the year before.

In early 2021 we forged a partnership with federal law enforcement agencies that has already taken 270 violent criminals off our streets, in addition to more than 300 guns, 53 kilos of meth and 7 kilos of cocaine. Our Project Safe Neighborhoods partnership is making our community safer and is celebrated as a success by the U.S. Attorney and our federal partners.

When we work together, we leverage our resources and the benefits are profound.

But all the data in the world doesn't make a difference if you, yourself, become a victim of crime. We will never forget that even one crime is too many.

Our work is far from done, and my promise to you is that we will be unrelenting as we continue working to make our city safer and more just for everyone.

People should feel safe as they travel our city's streets, sidewalks, bike lanes and byways. But, sadly, that's not the case for many Salt Lakers today.

Two weeks ago I announced that Salt Lake City was committing to Vision Zero and pledging to a series of steps designed to achieve zero traffic-related deaths and serious injuries by 2035.

In the week following that announcement, there were *six* auto-versus-pedestrian incidents: Two elementary-school students in a crosswalk on their way to school; a 31-year old man crossing the road late at night; two teenagers on their way to a convenience store; and a man in his 30s, killed in a hit-and-run near Trolley Square.

One act of vehicular violence in a week is *unacceptable*, but six is *unconscionable*.

Wherever you are in Salt Lake, you deserve to be on the safest street in our city.

As a city, we won't stop working to make our streets safer. We've taken steps like reducing the speed limit on residential streets from 25 to 20 miles per hour and creating a Safe Streets Task Force to identify traffic-violence hot spots and recommend corrective actions.

We will build our budget to begin installing more left-turn protections, which account for *19 percent* of auto-versus-pedestrian crashes; and we'll reduce the number of legal right-turns at city intersections, which account for *11 percent* of auto-versus-pedestrian crashes.

We will also continue to increase funding for traffic-calming measures and interventions that will slow cars down and provide better access for cyclists and pedestrians.

But the hard fact remains: The most powerful tool for reducing traffic violence is *us* — the choices we make when we get behind the wheel.

My goal is to have the safest streets in America. Our residents, businesses and visitors deserve nothing less.

No issue has challenged our city like the state's *and nation's* homelessness crisis.

There is no issue I spend more time on, no issue that inspires stronger feelings, and no issue on which it has been more important to cultivate strong, productive partnerships with local, county, and state partners.

Homelessness continues to grow in just about every city in America.

And for years, here in our capital city, it felt like we shouldered the vast majority of the state's humanitarian crisis on our own, beyond our capacity and well beyond the city's role.

As much as some folks out there — even today — would tell you that homelessness should be “solved” by the mayor alone, that's a backwards and false notion.

This City team is doing more than ever before to serve those neighbors who become unhoused, to build supportive housing, and, most critically, to build the PARTNERSHIP with our State, County and sister cities that was lacking for so long.

This partnership among levels of government is a true relationship where we listen, we share, we plan, we learn, and we move strategically — together — because we know that together, we are greater than the sum of our parts.

Together, we've brought other cities to the table for this work.

Together, we've funded more than 400 new permanent and transitional supportive housing units opening in just a few months.

And together, we're finally finding the way to services and housing, not the cycle of incarceration and homelessness, for those with severe mental illness who live on our streets today.

Homelessness is complex; it's as complex as each individual and family who experiences it. But we should not be intimidated. I'm not. I'll tell you why:

Because we're builders. Governor Cox, Wayne Neiderhauser, Mayor Jenny Wilson, Mayors Wood, Silvestrini and Stevens. Katherine Fife, Michelle Hoon, Tricia Davis, Laurie Hopkins, Erin and David Litvack, Andrew Johnston. And so many more with the right *temperament*, expertise, and commitment to make an impact.

We should not be intimidated. Because we are the state with the strongest economy, 15 years running, with a billion-dollar state budget surplus.

We should not be intimidated because we have approximately 400 individuals in our county, 700 total in our state who don't fit in our shelter system. That's compared to more than 1,000

people in Idaho, nearly 3,000 in Colorado, 4,200 in Nevada, 5,500 in Arizona, and 170,000 in California.

We can do this.

I'm not telling you that homelessness will ever be — nor *has* it ever been — completely erased. But I am telling you that we've turned a page from the finger-pointing and isolation of the past, to a catalytic, productive, and focused partnership with the State, County, sister cities, service providers, and advocates.

This is where we should be working, as conveners and collaborators. This is what our residents — housed and unhoused — deserve.

That's why Salt Lake City has partnered with the Other Side Academy to build a community of tiny homes for our unsheltered neighbors. Thank you to our TOSA friends for being here tonight! Progress at the site is moving forward, a key environmental study is about to begin, and my administration is ready to move at light speed the second it clears those hurdles.

In addition, late last year the City Council approved my plan to urgently invest \$6 million in three projects designed to create more than 400 beds in permanent supportive housing units. Those funds joined investments by the county and state and I'm delighted to report that we are on target to open at least 400 new beds this spring as the winter shelters close.

Salt Lake City is investing in more affordable housing units than we *ever* have before.

In 2021 and 2022, we invested a combined \$15.7 million dollars in affordable housing through the city's Redevelopment Agency. This fiscal year alone, we're investing more than \$30 million dollars.

To put that in perspective, Salt Lake City did not invest a dime in affordable housing before 2009, and what we're investing *this last year alone* is more than we invested in the 10 years that followed *combined*.

The 2,494 units of RDA-backed affordable housing that have opened over the *last three years* or are already in production right now are more units than opened in ***all *previous *years combined*.

My friends, this is just the beginning.

Our Thriving in Place project set out to focus our anti-gentrification work and yielded 21 recommendations, many of which I plan to bring to the City Council this year to keep people in their homes whenever possible... and to keep them in their community when it isn't.

One of those recommendations is at the heart of a major *new* avenue the city is creating to expand our inventory of family-sized affordable housing that I'm thrilled to tell you about tonight.

With the support of our City Council, we will invest up to 10 million dollars in wealth-building homes for 1,500 families in our city. Using President Biden's federal Rescue Plan funds, we'll build intergenerational stability and combat homelessness by creating stable, affordable, wealth-generating housing for families in Salt Lake City.

This will be the most innovative, equity-building housing model Utah has ever seen, creating at least 1,000 new units of very affordable housing and 500 resident-owned homes that will create equity-like nest eggs for people currently unable to access the housing market.

Our partnership to achieve this breakthrough housing is with the Perpetual Housing Fund of Utah, led by Chris Parker.

The fund is designed with the residents — not the corporation — sharing the profits each year and being the beneficiaries of any property sales or refinancing. It's not only new affordable housing, it is ongoing checks in the hands of the residents. It's millions of dollars that will go into the pockets of residents.

I am incredibly excited about this transformative new approach, the role it will play in fighting displacement, and the impact it will have on ensuring that people at all income levels will be able to continue to call Salt Lake City 'home.'

I am determined to continue making record investments in affordable housing in this city.

I am committed to using every tool in the city's toolbox — and to keep creating new tools — to responsibly and equitably expand our city's housing inventory.

We will never surrender to gentrification and we will do everything we can to ensure that the people who make this city can continue to *live* in this city.

Earlier this month, a team of noted scientists presented the results of a devastating new study of the Great Salt Lake — in just FIVE years, the entire lake could be gone and the time to act is much, much shorter.

I'll say it again: according to this study, in just FIVE years, the Great Salt Lake *could be gone*.

Last year, residents, businesses, and institutions within Salt Lake City's water service area collectively reduced our consumption by more than 15 percent, saving 2.9 billion gallons of water. We have considerable reason to be proud of this substantial community effort.

This winter's above-average snowfall will also help, for sure, but scientists warn that it is not nearly enough — not remotely close to enough — to solve the greater problem. While drought conditions have improved since last year, all of Utah remains in a severe drought. It will take more than one good year to pull our watershed out of this decades-long megadrought.

More sobering are two key facts that put our challenge in perspective.

First, the entire Salt Lake Valley — the Great Salt Lake Basin — only accounts for about 9 percent of the total water use affecting the Great Salt Lake each year.

And second, remember those nearly 3 billion gallons of water saved by the communities served by Salt Lake City last year? Well the Great Salt Lake is sitting at, on average, a three *hundred* and ninety-one billion gallon water deficit right now.

The Legislature is planning to make this a major priority during this legislative session. I've spoken about it at length with Governor Cox, Speaker Wilson, and other state leaders and I know how important this is to them.

We aren't in this alone, but we must do more.

History will judge us for the choices we make and *don't* make right now. Five years is not a long time, so it won't be our grandkids who judge us, or even our kids — *we* will be able to *judge ourselves*.

I will not sit back and watch the Great — Salt — Lake turn to toxic dust.

We will not put our feet up and say 'we've done enough.'

So today I am announcing three major new proposals that I will bring to the City Council.

First, Salt Lake City will conduct a top-to-bottom review of the city government's water usage in every facility, in every park, and at the cemetery, conducting a detailed assessment of every irrigation system, every water fountain, and every green space.

This is about getting smarter, getting more creative, and identifying opportunities to do better — all as part of an aggressive, coordinated strategy. The conservation steps we've already taken have been meaningful and effective, but we know we can and must do better.

Second, one of the most effective strategies for inducing water conservation is to send a price signal through our water rate structure.

Salt Lake City has long utilized a tiered water conservation rate structure where the cost of water increases as more water is used, particularly during the outdoor watering season. This four-tiered rate structure is intended to discourage high water use, while allowing affordable water for basic purposes.

Other communities needing to reduce water usage have tried to discourage usage through significant and permanent across-the-board increases that leave users no financial choice.

Given our successful conservation record, I don't believe *that* particular approach is right for us.

Instead I will recommend to the Council that the city implement a *temporary drought surcharge* on the biggest water consumers to encourage reductions in outdoor watering.

Done right — done fairly — done *equitably* — consumers who use less water would avoid the surcharge.

As drought conditions in the region improve, the surcharge would be reduced. As it worsens, the surcharge would increase. When the drought ends, the surcharge would end, as well.

And third, Salt Lake City's water reclamation facility treats on average 35 million gallons of water each day.

Today, I am asking the Council to stand with me to formally *pledge* that high-quality treated water go to the Great Salt Lake and I will authorize our Public Utilities Department to file the necessary water right documentation amounting to an annual contribution of nearly 13 billion gallons from our city.

The disappearance of the Great Salt Lake is not something that is happening *to* us, it's something that is happening largely *because* of us, and because of climate change. Utahns are not victims or passive observers — we must take responsibility for our choices and take bold action now.

I know we can do it, because Salt Lakers are deeply committed to our environment.

In fact, the sustainability work we have done together over the last three years has made it possible to do some incredible things over the next five years, ten years, and beyond.

Our city is on track to be more environmentally resilient than ever before.

The thousand trees we're planting on the West side each year...

The \$85 million parks bond voters approved last fall...

The new readiness requirements for electric-vehicle charging spots in new residential projects...

The solar energy that will soon power our city government...

The net-100 percent renewable energy that is finally on track to arrive citywide by the end of the decade...

All these pieces connect to empower an incredible future for Salt Lake City where we will take our vision for cleaner air and a stronger environment to the next level.

A future with more green roofs that can capture pollution and produce oxygen to improve our air quality, in addition to reducing the heat-island effect in the city.

A future with a denser urban forest, that catches up on decades of ecological neglect on our West side.

A future with more public parks, including smaller "pocket" parks to strengthen community in our neighborhoods.

A future with more community gardens and the city's first urban orchard where residents who are hungry can pick fresh fruit and vegetables, free of charge,

A future with more public-private partnerships that leverage our public spaces further with private resources, expertise, and time.

A future with more public transit options and less cost. Free Fare Forever.

A future where the Jordan River is the heart of our westside parks system, an ecological and recreational hub that draws people from all over the city walking their dog or riding a kayak.

A future with 75 acres connecting the westside to downtown because the train tracks are buried underground.

A future with more recreational bike paths, a Green Loop around downtown, and walking trails.

A future where no resident in this city is more than a 15-minute walk or bike ride away from their daily needs.

A future where the city is running its own sustainability rebate program to help residents not only trade-in their polluting lawn mowers for clean electric ones, but also get rebates for clean-electric-powered snow blowers, indoor air filters, e-bikes, smart sprinklers and more to help us all cut down on the pollution we create.

A future where families fit in our city — literally and figuratively — because the city and our partners are building them in and helping them afford to thrive.

This is the future I am passionate about building — and it's only possible because of the incredible progress we've made together over these last few years.

Think about it: Salt Lake City residents will soon be able to charge their e-bike or electric car at city-owned EV stations powered by clean, renewable solar energy.

And we're less than seven years away from every Salt Lake City resident being able to charge their phone, the lawn mower, their electric vehicle, and to run their entire home on clean renewable electricity.

That's incredible.

We have worked hard, we have worked together, and we are *ready* for this greener, more resilient future that our city deserves.

And finally tonight, I'd like to talk about growth and connectedness.

I believe the defining question of our time is whether we make the city's growth work *for* us or let it happen *to* us. For three years we have executed a strategy more akin to surfing a wave rather than futilely trying to hold it back, and as a result, the next decade is going to be just incredible for our city.

Unlike other cities whose downtowns haven't recovered...

Unlike other cities whose pandemic-era crime rates are still growing...

Unlike other cities who have been unable to sufficiently rebuild their police departments from the mass resignations of 2020 and 2021...

Unlike other cities whose populations are shrinking...

Unlike other cities whose economies haven't modernized and prepared for the high-tech future...

Unlike other cities whose leaders insist on going it alone instead of working with their state and regional partners...

Unlike other cities, Salt Lake City is ready, but we *have* to keep innovating and we have to keep working together.

Growth is good but it's obvious that it comes at a cost: Connection.

As we get bigger as a city, the connections between us are stretching and straining — and all of this is happening at a time when social media and digital algorithms are designed literally to separate us and divide us from each other... politically, socially, and even culturally.

Our connection to each other as a city — as a *community* — is worth fighting for. But the solution isn't ham-handedly trying to go back to when our city was smaller, scaring people into being afraid of change.

No. Instead, our *thinking* needs to get bigger, too. Our creativity, our ingenuity, our resourcefulness, and most importantly: our commitment to staying connected needs to grow.

We can't let our rapid *residential* growth distract us from the need for *economic* growth in those neighborhoods as well. Increased *commercial* density brings us closer together.

Neighborhood coffee shops, grocery stores, even bars and restaurants — they become intersections for interaction with our neighbors. Retail stores and offices create jobs that create daily foot traffic and bring streams of consumers to storefronts.

The goal is not to replace locally owned small businesses — it's to support them, to help them benefit from the city's growth, and surround them with fellow businesses that will help bring customers to their door.

When I became mayor, we shifted the priority of the city's economic development department from a focus on attracting *new* businesses, to supporting our existing businesses. It's absolutely vital to the health of our city and is helping create a more attractive, inclusive economy.

We're going to build on that kind of work and strengthen the economic fabric of our city by intensifying our economic development in neighborhoods that are quickly adding residents but not yet retailers.

Salt Lake City's economic density *must* keep pace with its residential growth.

Downtown, that means more connective tissue between the entertainment and cultural opportunities available in our city. If you're coming Downtown for a Jazz game or a concert or to go to a restaurant, there should be two or three other places you want to go while you're there. Art galleries and unique stores to explore. Bars and dessert spots.

We're not just after economic density — we want economic *diversity* that makes the city's commercial fabric colorful and strong.

We're going to keep building out the Ballpark Station Area Plan, seeing it through, and making the area safer and stronger even without the Bees.

Of course I'm sad to see the Bees go. Their impact on our city's history and identity these last 30 years hasn't been so much about what happened on the field, but about the memories we made in the stands... with our kids, with our friends... with Bumble.

My team and I worked closely with the team's owner over the past 20 months, but it became clear that the Bees anchoring their development in Daybreak was the likeliest outcome.

The opportunity we now have — the *responsibility* we have — is to find a way for the community to benefit from the property 365 days a year.

Our ambitious Ballpark Station Area Plan was approved in November after 11 months of public comment, and we went to work right away to implement it. A new crosswalk is being designed on 1300 South near the TRAX station to improve pedestrian safety, the traffic analysis is already underway to explore lane reconfiguration on 1300 South, and we've assembled a team to review zoning changes.

The departure of the ballclub gives us the chance to reimagine the neighborhood beyond the streets and sidewalks, building on the transportation and public safety improvements with an even *bigger* vision that will benefit more residents, more businesses, and more of the city.

We now have access to 13 and a half acres of prime real estate and I am committed to a creative and aggressive path forward that results in the year-round, *daily* activation that the neighborhood and the city deserve.

While the City has a number of really exciting ideas for how to utilize the stadium property, others have great ideas, too, and it's important to me the community is a partner with us moving forward. I hope you'll go to BallparkNext.com to be a part of the process and share your ideas.

Gail Miller and the leadership of the Larry H. Miller Company love Salt Lake City and the Ballpark neighborhood, and they have treasured their time at Smith's Ballpark. When it became clear that the Bees would definitely move, I urged them to consider their legacy and demonstrate their commitment to the continued strengthening of the Ballpark neighborhood.

And so, with our city as their partner, I am excited to announce that the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation has agreed to lead a \$100 million public-private partnership, a fundraising initiative that will provide a historic, human-centered investment into the Ballpark Neighborhood.

In the coming months, along with Salt Lake City, Zions Bank, and Intermountain Health as founding partners, this innovative and collaborative public-private partnership will generate investment dollars that will give life to programs and opportunities that build human capital, improve social determinants of health and economic mobility, and truly lift the entire community.

There has never been an investment like this in our city before.

This commitment of human-centered programs and life-lifting opportunities will bring tremendous leverage to the ideas being generated right now in our Ballpark Next competition.

Gail, thank you for being here tonight, and thank you to your family, your Foundation, and the Larry H. Miller Company.”

So many thanks, also, to Scott Anderson and Mikelle Moore of Intermountain Healthcare.

Cities are constantly changing. That is in their nature. Cities that don't change, don't adapt, don't evolve — those cities *die*. *Reinvention* is how cities survive.

Rocky Mountain Power's 100-acre “Power District” campus is more proof of that, and another just incredible opportunity for us to drive new economic opportunities for the West side.

I am deeply committed to strengthening the economic texture of the West side by working to attract national retailers and supporting local entrepreneurs ready to open brick-and-mortar locations in our community.

Over the next few years, we're going to focus more on economic “infill” — preparing vacant city-owned properties in our downtown and Westside for commercial development not exclusively for housing, but to attract economic investment.

In addition to prioritizing economic development on City property, our team is already working on the North Temple Economic Revitalization Action Plan. North Temple should be a grand entrance into our beautiful city, but traditional economic development tools have not been effective. This revitalization plan will be created in close partnership with the North Temple business community, placing the community's needs at the center of new development.

Our long-term strategy for economic development also includes a renewed commitment and significant investment in Utah's cultural core — Salt Lake City's downtown sports and entertainment district.

Salt Lakers crave connection. Has the city ever felt more alive than those summer nights when Main Street was closed to cars... hundreds of people in the street on their way for a pint at Beerhive or dinner at Eva or a show at the Gallivan Center?

We don't just want the Delta Center — it's fun to be able to call it that again — we don't just want the Delta Center to be a place you go to see a Jazz game. We're building a district around it where fans are surrounded by opportunities to have fun before and after a Jazz game. Before and after a ballet at Capitol Theater, a Broadway show at the Eccles, or checking out the latest exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Art.

I am determined to make Downtown Salt Lake a culture and recreation destination 365 days a year.

Bridging the physical gulf between Downtown and the West side would not only help heal the century-old divide in our city, but could unlock the massive economic opportunity in the 75 acres that lie between. The Rio Grande Plan is incredibly compelling and we have applied for a federal grant to formally explore moving the train tracks that have divided us for so long.

Either way, improving the connectivity and accessibility between and around all of our downtown destinations is a central component of our strategy. We need more and *more efficient* parking for cars. We need a secure bicycle garage, as well as expanded capacity, frequency, and reach for public transportation.

The potential for our downtown is *limitless*, and our commitment to creatively fulfilling it will be relentless.

Imagine an NHL team that plays its games in the Delta Center or its successor and practices at a new, open-to-the-public facility in the Power District or Ballpark neighborhood.

Imagine a vibrant downtown Olympic Medals plaza that becomes a permanent public park and concert venue.

The economic opportunities we have are exciting on their own, but together, they can define and drive the next 50 years of our city.

And, that's the name of the game — putting our opportunities to work for us — for *all of us*. Confronting our challenges creatively. And doing it all *together*.

They're coming at us faster than ever now, but that's what it means to be a growing city in this high-tech, modern world.

But we are *ready*.

We're ready for *whatever* comes next.

The work we're doing now, together, is making this future possible. This more connected, more accessible, more sustainable and more equitable future — ***we *are *ready*.

There are no shortcuts to this. There are no magic wands. I wish it were easier — *man, do sometimes I wish it were easier* — but Salt Lakers are pioneers, aren't we?

The pandemic, the earthquakes, the windstorm — the crises we've faced together the last three years didn't *make* us resilient, they *revealed* our resilience and strength.

We're building a Salt Lake City whose brand and identity are driven by people who are proud of our city and who are excited by its future, not afraid of it.

We are ready. Let's keep building, Salt Lake City. And let's do it together.

Thank you and good night.