

State of the City Address
January 15, 2019

It is difficult to believe it has been one year since I was sworn in as Mayor. People ask me if I like the job. I tell them I like it ...about 90% of the time. But there are challenges in any job. I have appreciated your trust. We have worked very hard on a wide range of issues, including much time spent with citizens.

Time moves fast, and government moves slowly, but we have accomplished a great deal in the past year. We have achieved that through teamwork and partnerships. I knew coming in we had an excellent team here at Logan City. I am even more impressed after working with the Executive and other staff this past year. I have appreciated the support of City Council. You are great folks to work with as well. I also acknowledge that I build on a foundation which others have laid, as projects, budgets and goals often take multiple years to implement.

As I prepared this State of the City address, and reviewed my goals and priorities, I would like to provide a report.

Goal number 1 is fiscal responsibility: The City of Logan is in a strong financial position. We have reserves in all significant areas built through a conservative approach to budgeting and spending. That will continue. We always look for ways to cut costs and streamline operations so tax dollars are used more efficiently.

Goal 2 is infrastructure replacement: In the FY '19 budget, our investment in infrastructure increased by over 20 percent. While we may not be able to match this same level of increase every year, our commitment to infrastructure remains strong.

Goal 3 is revitalizing downtown. Our beautiful and historic downtown is the heart and soul of our city. As Logan ages and the valley grows, investment and action is needed to draw people downtown and build on the assets we have there. If you've been in my office, you've seen my framed poster, "The Twenty Ingredients of an Outstanding Downtown," which includes living and staying downtown, a programmed plaza with activities, sidewalk café dining, and retail and restaurants open after 6 pm. We are working on those items.

One key partnership this year is with property owners on historic Center Street (between Main and 100 West.) We formed a Special Assessment Area to completely re-do that block to create a pedestrian friendly, walkable area where

people enjoy gathering. It will include new, wider sidewalks with outdoor dining, a mid-block pedestrian crossing, mini-plaza, planters, and more. We will fix aging water and sewer lines and replace the street and its old, deep curb and gutter. I thank the owners for their participation. We will begin this spring. There will be growing pains during construction, so we ask your patience as we improve downtown. We have had great teamwork from the legal, public works, economic and community development departments, and support from Council, to make this happen.

Another partnership, with developer Cowboy Partners, is working to create a new vision for the Emporium block. After meetings with the public, adjacent property owners, City Council, Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Committee, Cowboy is close to a concept plan which will include demolishing the Emporium, two adjacent buildings, and utilizing the parking lot behind it for new development which could include a public plaza, housing, structured parking and some retail/dining. We will be evaluating whether a new library might be located there. From the concept plan, we will negotiate to see if we – the City and Cowboy Partners -- can reach a development agreement. This is not a done deal – but we have a vision, and are optimistic we can create a good project there. We anticipate using funds from our Redevelopment Agency, which we have been setting aside for just such use, to help make this happen. One major goal for 2019 is to reach a development agreement for Center Block.

A strong downtown will help us revitalize our historic core neighborhoods. If people can live close to a walkable and vibrant downtown, so they spend less time driving and commuting, they will choose to stay in, and move to, these neighborhoods.

Goal 4 is neighborhood improvement. Last spring, in partnership with council, we passed a Six-Point Neighborhood Improvement Plan, including re-instating Neighborhood Councils; a \$1M Revitalization Grant program; a vacant building ordinance; an increase in fines for over-occupancy; and stronger enforcement of existing property maintenance standards. Our new part-time code enforcement officer issued over 500 “Courtesy Notices” this year, getting compliance on about 50% of cases within ten days, and following up on the rest. With this effort, we have tried to educate about community standards that improve our neighborhoods for all. Thanks to the Neighborhood Councils for their involvement!

Now I’d like to summarize just a few of the accomplishments and goals in various departments:

Community Development, in addition to implementing the many neighborhood projects listed above, worked with Planning Commission (whom we appreciate) to create new Town Center 1 & 2 zones, new Historic District Design Guidelines and to update the Land Development code, all of which support our efforts downtown. They also handled a 20% increase in permits and inspections this year.

Our Economic Development Director has played a key role in our downtown projects, as well as creation of the South Main Community Reinvestment Area. We appreciate the partnership of Wasatch Development, the County and Logan School District to help us remove blight in the South Main area. The goal is to bring land costs back to the equivalent of “building on raw land,” as re-development is expensive. As part of that effort, the city has partnered with Wasatch to restore the Logan River on the north side of the current Riverwoods development to include a public trail along the river. It will be a great amenity for citizens to enjoy, and another key piece in tying together our trail system, which helps accomplish another goal to continue connecting trails and parks.

With that, we’ll move to Parks & Recreation. Another great partnership, with the River Restoration Task Force -- including USU professors, non-profit groups and citizens with expertise in all things river-related -- has resulted in the completion of several excellent projects and more potential projects if we can find grant funding. Plan a trip to Stewart Nature Park and Rendevous Park next spring to see the restoration work, including two ponds at Rendevous that will help control flooding and sediment, but will also be great areas for recreation (think wading, fishing, paddleboards, etc.) A trail connection is planned for next summer at Stewart, and another was completed last fall from Rendevous Park, across both the river and Park Avenue, making a great link from the golf course trail all the way to Trapper Park, where we have also installed a new playground. In fact, there have been so many new trail connections in the last couple of years, we are updating our trail map. The new Canyon Connector Trail (the one from First Dam to USU) will be completed by June. That was another partnership; we thank USU, the CMPO and UDOT for their help in making it happen.

Seven years ago, Council had a vision of a connected trail system and set aside \$1.2M specifically for property acquisition and construction. It was a legacy project that will enhance our quality of life for years to come. Herm, Tom and myself were on council, as were Dean Quayle and Karl Ward. The final funds from

that project are being spent on the Canyon Connector Trail. Think what we have accomplished: the walkway around First Dam which connects to the Canyon Road Trail; the final section of the Boulevard trail, the connection I mentioned at Rendezvous park and extension of the trail to Trapper Park. We are still working to improve a couple of troublesome spots, but we now have a connected network of trails from the far southwest corner of Logan all the way to Logan Canyon, which connects to USU, the Bonneville Shoreline Trail and Lundstrom Park Trail on the East bench.

Parks & Rec has also replaced basketball and tennis courts at Merlin Olsen Park, along with new accessible sidewalks; has installed new pickleball courts at Bridger Park and will construct a new bike park at Bridger in 2019. They are working on a cemetery master plan, have made improvements to the cemetery pump house, and have a goal to reduce culinary water usage there by 17% next year. At the Rec Center, they have replaced a roof section and resurfaced the gym floor (another partnership – this one with the School District) and will be installing outdoor fitness equipment in several parks as part of a Healthy Community Grant they received. Our golf course is in excellent shape, but has required a significant subsidy since 2011. We are looking at options to address that situation and will hold a public meeting on the topic on January 29.

This month, we will also begin discussing proposed new dog ordinances, including a year-long pilot program which would include making some parks “dog friendly” or could allow unleashed dogs in some parks during certain hours, based on a successful program in Boise. This is an issue I heard about frequently during the campaign – that Logan needs to be more dog-friendly. It’s a difficult balancing act, as some folks have concerns about dogs. We invite participation by council (who makes the final decision) and the public at a meeting on January 22, as we discuss possible options and try to negotiate a workable compromise. Parks is leading the effort, and police will help with enforcement.

Since we mentioned police, let’s move on to our police and then fire departments. Public safety is a big component of what the city does, and we appreciate their efforts. Hiring and retention of qualified police, fire and EMS personnel is a challenge in our current market. It’s a tough job!

First, police. There are three shifts covering patrol night and day, as well as the rest of the officers. I read the end of watch reports –the supervisor highlights the calls of note in an email. Our officers respond with professionalism at any hour

and often simply provide help. But I can't tell you how many DUIs and impaired drivers they get off the streets, how many domestic violence and drug calls they deal with, and so much more... they respond to keep our community safe. The patrol officers are backed up by the detectives, investigators and administrators. This year, police created their own animal shelter by remodeling a small, unused city building. This cost about what we formerly paid for a year's worth of animal control services. They also partnered with Bridgerland's Vet-tech program to provide low-cost chip clinics for many dogs and cats. Another accomplishment is the 911 Center now has capability to handle live 911 texting.

We also have Fire/EMS which handle over 5100 emergency incident calls a year. These first responders deal with extraordinarily difficult situations. If you have the misfortune to be involved in an accident or fire, these guys show up to help – with great response times, I might add. The fire department has implemented an Officer Development Program and significantly increased training opportunities. We have successfully renegotiated our contract with both Cache County Emergency Medical System (CCEMS) and with Providence City to reflect the realities of the service we provide. This will provide additional revenue to cover costs of that work. Through significant effort, they also upgraded the department's ISO (Insurance Service Office) rating from a class 4 to class 2. This is a huge accomplishment, and will have significant benefits for our citizens, especially our commercial businesses, in terms of their fire insurance rates. Only 7 out of 344 departments in the state of Utah have a class 2 or better rating, and less than 3% of departments in the country. Goals for 2019 include completing an interlocal agreement for shared services with North Logan, another partnership which will benefit both cities and their citizens. We will also be reviewing county-wide mutual and automatic aid responses.

Another department that provides great service is Public Works. They support many projects in the city besides being responsible for facilities, fleets and shops, engineering, streets, water delivery and sewer collection. A few highlights: Last year they completed the new roundabout at 600 East, new sidewalks along Riverside Drive, 200 East by the middle school, and along 200 West at 1400 North, all spots where there were many pedestrians but no sidewalk. They installed a new waterline between two city storage tanks to greatly increase efficiency, reduce energy costs and improve water delivery to residents. In 2019, the big water project will be a new waterline and storm drain in 1200 North (from 200 to 600 East.) This is one of the worst areas in the city for emergency water leaks, and is being done as a direct result of the recent water rate increase to improve aging infrastructure.

Two major road projects will be to improve 1400 North (at 600 West), including a new traffic signal and railroad crossing, and to complete 1800 North (from 800 to 1000 West.) Both projects will improve East/West mobility.

Since we're discussing transportation, lets also mention Main Street. Another goal was to consider the future of Main Street. Over the past year, in partnership with UDOT, we have engaged members of the public, neighborhood councils, civic leaders and more to discuss our overall goals for Main Street. We are preparing to join with UDOT and the CMPO to commission an in-depth study to determine whether a one-way couplet scenario for Main Street and 100 West could help traffic congestion and accommodate future growth. That RFP should go out in the next several months. We will keep you informed as that progresses.

The Library continues to serve an average of 700-plus patrons of all ages each day with both traditional and digital resources. They do it with good cheer in an aging building with many physical challenges. Their community-center role provides story times, after school clubs, writers workshops, multi-cultural programming, and a location for over 80 community groups to hold meetings and events. They have switched two collections to provide a larger area for the growing number of youth and teens using the library. They received two major grants this year, allowing them to replace aging children's computers, laptops and robotic devices for youth programs as well as provide Kindle book club kits. They have done small-scale, "band-aid" repairs to the building as we consider a location and remaining funding for a new library building. As mentioned earlier, we are considering whether the Library might be located in the new Emporium Block Development. If that does not work, we need to address an alternate location in the coming year.

In the Environmental Department, construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant has begun and will continue for the next several years. From a financial perspective, this is one of the most significant undertakings in the history of the City with a cost of \$150M, and will serve our treatment needs for many years to come. Through good planning, we saved resources for this project and committed over \$30M from reserves toward construction. That approach helps reduce needed rate increases and saves taxpayers money throughout the life of the project. They operate the City Forestry department, and as always, they pick up garbage and recycling countywide, and operate the current and new North Valley Landfill. Thanks for keeping our valley clean and tidy.

Light and Power replaced older main substation transformers, which connect us to the grid, with new, high efficiency, greater capacity transformers. This will accommodate many years of electrical growth in the city. They also upgraded substation 6, which feeds the hospital and surrounding areas, with a higher capacity circuit. It was maxed out, but now has plenty of capacity to handle current loads and future growth in that area. The power department owns Third Dam, and finally got needed permits to redo the dam for safety reason; this will provide a small amount of additional hydro power. They also continue to put overhead power lines underground to beautify the city. Goals for next year include rebuilding substation 4 which will add needed capacity for the new wastewater plant, and building a new line to service the plant. They have an outstanding track record for reliable power to our homes and businesses, which they achieve by proactive maintenance and projects like the ones mentioned above.

I need to also recognize our Human Resources Department, which coordinates over 400 city employees, and provide a shout-out to all those great, hardworking employees who keep the city running. Thank you!

Our Legal Department and City Recorder also support all city activities and keep us organized and on track. Teresa Harris is responsible for city elections in 2019, so keep that in mind. That is a big job! The Finance Department is inherent to everything we do and key to our budgetary and financial discipline.

In summary, I would like you to remember three key points: People, passion and partnerships.

First, thanks to the wonderful people who have helped in so many ways to make this an outstanding year! Second, I have tried to serve with passion and energy, and have worked with many others that are also passionate about issues in our wonderful city. I have tried to listen, and I appreciate their care and concern. Third, the partnerships with many diverse entities have made things possible that we couldn't have accomplished alone. We all win when we work together for a common goal.

I look forward to more good things happening in 2019.