



STATE OF THE CITY

January 21, 2014

Good evening, City Council Members, staff, residents and friends. It is my honor tonight to present my first State of the City Address. As your new Mayor, perhaps I can start with an introduction. As many of you know, my grandparents moved to Murray in 1920. They purchased a home just a few blocks away from this building on Wasatch Street. My parents started their family in this home as well. My wife and I have raised our four children here for the past 27 years, thus continuing four generations of our family as Murray City residents. This is not uncommon for our City, for many of our citizens have been multi-generational residents. This speaks very highly of the quality of life that has existed here for decades. However, as proud as I am of our families' Murray history, I am equally proud and excited for our first-generation residents who will raise their children here and subsequent generations thereafter while beginning their own family traditions and memories. They too will enjoy the many great services, exceptional educational experiences, varied cultural and athletic opportunities and a wonderful sense of community.

I am grateful to be entrusted with this position. Before I ran for office, and during the campaign, I was able to meet and come to know each of the members of our City Council, and many employees and staff who truly make this City function in such an exceptional way. It has been so impressive to observe their talents and dedication in serving the residents of Murray. I come into this position with an open mind and heart and with a willingness to learn how I might contribute to keeping our City a place known for its great neighborhoods, thriving businesses and outstanding quality of life.

Tonight I would like to set my remarks in a tone of history, recent accomplishments, and plans for the future. In 2013, Murray City celebrated our 110th birthday. We live in a city with deep roots and strength from the early settlers who came with a focus to make this a self-contained and livable community. In the past decade, we have celebrated centennial birthdays of our Police and Fire Departments, Murray City Power, Library, along with our current roads and water systems. The founders of this City came with ideas and aspirations for independence. Their foresight and hard work laid the foundation for our current ability to provide the majority of city services in a way that was both self-determined and self-governed.

On the side of each of our police cars is written the saying, "Proudly serving since 1903." That is ever since this City was incorporated. During that year, our first mayor, C. L. Miller hired the first, and only at that time, city marshal by the name of Michael Mauss. He remained the sole law enforcement officer until he hired his first deputy in 1910. Today, this City has every right to be proud of a police department that works both day and night to keep Murray a safe place to live and work. These dedicated individuals put their own safety at risk as they clear warrants, make drug arrests, patrol our neighborhoods and businesses, and educate the public. They provide School

Resource Officers that work with all the schools in the City to keep students in a good and safe environment for learning. Last year our D.A.R.E. Officer helped 650 fifth-grade students complete this program that addresses drug and alcohol abuse, along with providing advice on bullying and coping with stressful situations. During 2013, the Police Department coordinated with the Fire Department to obtain a grant to replace the computer system in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Another grant they received provided body cameras for all patrol officers. These cameras help officers with reports, court testimony and provide training, as they record both audio and video at the scene of incidents. Through a coordinated effort, which was led by our City Council, we were able to replace our aging fleet with 24 new police cars and four new motorcycles. Our Police Department is unified in purpose and unified as a group, and they should always remain the Murray Police Department.

In 2006, we celebrated the centennial of the Fire Department. Although they began with humble roots and horse-drawn water wagons, today they provide a multitude of services. Our three strategically placed fire stations, along with our Medical Response Station, provide for rapid response to all areas of the City. In 2009, we began providing Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance service, responding to 3,500 medicals calls in 2013, with just over 2,000 of them being transported for further treatment. Our firefighters are specialized in helping victims in medical distress, injuries resulting from accidents, along with water rescue. They often take advantage of buildings that will be demolished for practical training drills. They also practice in the EOC for earthquake drills and other types of large-scale disasters. But, our firefighters go well beyond the basic requirements of their duties and are well loved in the City. This can be evidenced by their very successful "Fill the Boot" effort to help fight Muscular Dystrophy along with many other activities of community involvement.

In the early years, our residents could not depend on reliable electrical power. So, through a challenging but concerted effort, they began producing hydro-electric power from McGhie Springs which also served as a culinary water resource. Their hard work and determination resulted in our being able to celebrate 100 years of service to Murray residents in 2013, and today we continue to be the only city-owned power utility in Salt Lake County.

In accordance with the provisions of their own charter: "The Power Department's primary role and mission is to provide, in a safe and efficient manner, the electrical needs of the department's designated service area; including supplying reliable, cost effective, and adequate sources of electrical capacity, energy and associated services." Under outstanding leadership and dedicated employees, this department has done precisely that. Along with enjoying the centennial activities in 2013, the Power Department made significant contributions to improving the financial stability of the department itself. With the wide array of changes impacting power companies around the country, they focused on improving reliability by clearing lines from tree branches and testing most of the transformers or other components of our electrical grid. This effort to the infrastructure of the system will pay great dividends in keeping the power on. While not only providing our citizens with a reliability rating of 99.9 percent, our

power company does so while offering our residents some of lowest utility rates in the state. Just recently they were able to complete four very complex and long-range contracts that will assure us of safe, dependable and cost-effective power for decades to come.

Murray is one of the few municipalities in the entire state that has its own library system. It first began with the construction of the Carnegie Library, located just one block to the north of this building, which opened its doors for learning on January 6, 1911. From these humble beginnings we have progressed to our current facility, which opened in 1992, offers a small amphitheater for children, study spaces, conference rooms and Wi-Fi access throughout the building. What a tribute this has become to our early settlers who had such an earnest desire for education and learning. Today more than 270,000 people visit and utilize this facility each year. Computers were used by our residents 127,000 times and for more than 80,000 hours last year alone. The creative staff have developed after-school programs that had over 2,800 students participating in them. Even though we have seen large increase in the advanced technology of e-books with over 17,000 being checked out last year, the interest in and the availability of traditional books is still evidenced by over 570,000 being circulated throughout the year. With all these new advancements and innovations, our library has not forgotten its roots, as it celebrated its centennial with a beautiful new stained glass Legacy Window to show case its history and to continue its mission statement, "To be your friendly, hometown library."

One of the most noticeable and significant aspects of making Murray such a wonderful place to live and raise our families, are the beautiful parks and recreational programs available to our residence and those who visit our city. Open space was important to our early settlers who acquired the property for our present Murray City Park in 1924. Following the Great Depression, the City was able to receive various federal grants to develop our city park system, to refurbish its existing 22-acre city park and to purchase 12 additional acres for fairgrounds. By 1939, Murray was the site of the annual Salt Lake County Fair. Today we have nine beautiful parks, strategically located throughout the City along with the Park Center, Murray Aquatics Center, Lynn F. Pett Murray Parkway Golf Course, baseball fields, soccer and rugby fields, playgrounds, and an outdoor amphitheater, just to name a few. The dedicated City employees that maintain and staff these facilities offer well over 100 recreational programs.

The cultural art opportunities thrive in our community. We are the home of several professional and amateur performing-arts groups. The Murray Symphony Orchestra is a community-based orchestra of professional and amateur musicians. They, along with the Murray Ballet Centre, the Murray Arts Center, and our theaters combine to provide opportunities in plays, various dancing groups and musical productions. The Murray City Cultural Arts program was created in 1992, along with the Arts Advisory Board and Cultural Programs Office which create year-round cultural activities. Recently we have included the Storytelling Festival, and the new Murder Mayhem in Murray which, in concert with other city-staffed productions, have allowed over 35,000 people to participate in, and enjoy.

The L. Clark Cushing Heritage Center is a vital and important recreational center for our citizens that are 55 years and older. They provided 12,700 meals last year, had 6,000 hours of volunteer service given, and have a wide variety of programs available. With choices including golfing, dancing, exercising, computer classes, quilting, games and socializing, almost 77,000 seniors attend during the year – and some come every day! There isn't a membership fee, but some of their activities have charges to offset cost. A monthly newsletter outlines all of their programs.

One of the basic services that a city needs is water. In 1905, the water system was successfully started as water was brought from McGhie Springs. Over the years, wells have been drilled and reservoirs built as growth brought greater demand. As new regulations have been put into place for cleaning and re-using water, we have created a Storm Water Division. This year they completed a Storm Water Management Plan that will help us continue to make improvement in cleaning the water that flows into our rivers, streams and lakes.

Roads and streets are services that evolved through the years. With the invention of the first automobiles, the demand came for more and smoother surfaces for driving. When you look around Murray now and see the extensive road system, along with this comes the constant need to keep it serviceable. With additional transportation options including buses, Trax, trains, bikes and walking, this system is very important to our current lifestyles. While we maintain streets, we also take the opportunity to improve other infrastructure below them, including water lines, drainage and moving power lines. There are also curbs and gutters that often need to be fixed in the process. During the 2013 construction season, some of the larger projects were on Kenwood Drive, Winchester, Fayette Drive, 235 East and 625 East. The majority of our road funding is used for overlays, crack sealing, asphalt rejuvenating and slurry seals. These give our roads longer life and prevent expensive rebuilding. We spend time and energy planning for larger projects like the continuation of Cottonwood Street north to 4500 South and rebuilding portions of 5900 South through the City. These projects take funding from many levels of government and work must be done to secure them prior to beginning construction.

The Murray City Justice Court has a shorter history, beginning in 1999. Since that time, they have implemented programs to reduce problems with recurring domestic violence actions and driving under the influence. Last year there was a huge effort with the Warrant Division of the Police Department to tract and address outstanding warrants. Over 1,000 cases were cleared or closed during the year. A grant was received for replacement of security cameras. With continued advances in technology, e-filing of citations is now in place as well as other online services.

The Administrative and Development Services (ADS) Department covers a wide variety of programs. They manage the building department, code enforcement and redevelopment efforts. This has been an exciting time with new projects coming out of the ground all around the City. Three new hotels are under construction, work continues

in the Fireclay Transient Oriented Development (TOD), and in our downtown there are 60 new units at the Center Court Apartments. Larry H. Miller dealerships completed the rebuilding of their stores and made a substantial investment on State Street. With the improving economy, 50 new commercial businesses came into the City this year.

The ADS supervises many additional night meetings including Planning & Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustment, and Murray City Center District (MCCD) meetings. They are key to implementing the City Strategic Plan by working with two committees-- one to encourage thriving neighborhoods and the other to enhance business development. The Redevelopment Agency also functions under this department.

ADS oversees many of our internal services. The Information Technology (IT) Division is under this department. They responded to almost 1,200 requests for computer help in the various departments and installed 50 new computers. Geographic Information Services (GIS) completed over 200 mapping projects that are valuable to many of the in-house services we provide. ADS coordinates with the Recorder Division who added a new service providing passports and have completed about 200 since its implementation in September. The Treasurer Division oversees utility billing and meter reading. These require high levels of customer service which they capably handle. The representatives handled almost 33,000 phone calls plus countless customers who come to the counters. ADS also manages our relationship with NeighborWorks, an outstanding organization that rehabilitates housing for low income residents.

The City Attorney's Office provides legal service for the City. They handle many very difficult cases that require much work and time. This year they contracted with a firm for additional help in managing claims. Our City Prosecutors handled over 13,200 criminal cases and 50 appeals to the District Court last year.

The Finance Department provides numerous reports to help with projections and planning. Under their direction, we have been able to pay off bonds early and make plans for sooner elimination of others. They are leading the effort to move to new city software that can improve services in many areas. Balancing the City budget is under their jurisdiction with input from elected officials. The Finance Department helped start a grant-writer program with a consultant who can identify possible grant opportunities.

Murray City has 370 full-time employees and about 470 seasonal employees. The Human Resources Department helps manage these employees and their benefits. They oversee health and safety programs and hired a new manager to handle these duties. They handled almost 700 applications for 22 jobs that were posted in 2013.

With these many services that are taken care of for the residents, we are constantly looking for the best and most responsible ways to allocate tax dollars that are entrusted to use.

Thus far, we have had the opportunity to review our rich history, emphasize and describe many of the areas that make our City so unique in character and quality, and

now I would like to take a few minutes to briefly explain some of the areas that I think are vital to our future and ones that you, as our City Council, our employees, and citizens should expect their Mayor to be well versed in and competently informed.

I have come to appreciate, even in this short time, the myriad of complex issues that face any city, but I would like to limit my discussion this evening to four such items.

The first item is that of UTOPIA. We have already initiated a policy, and put into practice a method whereby many of us can ask questions and expect answers to previously unresolved issues. The approach that I am taking, is to list viable solutions and then identify, in detail, all of the conditions and consequences of each of them. Then, and only then, will the individuals who the citizens have entrusted to make these decisions, be empowered with the knowledge necessary to choose the solution that is best for our community. We owe this to our residents and tax payers, and the Mayor should assume this responsibility to be the point-man on this issue.

Item two—Downtown redevelopment. Due to the hard work and determination of the prior mayor, the City Council, and various department heads and employees, along with a more favorable economy and renewed faith of builders and developers, we have seen a resurgence of new buildings and businesses in our City. This is an exciting time for all of us, yet with this opportunity we have a duty of accountability, not only to our future, but to our past as well. As we revitalize our downtown area, we will work together to insure that we protect the character and history of this area as well as developing an attractive and inviting place that we can be proud of.

Item three—An important element is in the investment of a new City Hall. This building has served us well, but our City has outgrown its original use and the residents of Murray wants their employees to work in a safe, efficient, attractive, yet fiscally responsible facility. I hope to be directly involved in working with our City Hall Committee to bring this to fruition in the very near future.

The fourth item I feel responsible for—The well-being, safety and motivation of our employees, as well as our residents. All of us have the right to feel that our elected officials have, as their preeminent objective, to provide a safe, beautiful and well-planned community, and to ensure an environment that enables our residents to be an integral and vital part of it. This incorporates sound financial choices, zoning and land-use decisions that continue, as it has in the past, to have the individuals' best interest at heart, as well as, maintaining consistency, and providing a vision of the future that inspires us to make our dreams become our realities.

With your help, your knowledge, and your patience, we can work together to make Murray a city without equal.

Thank you.