

Mayor Cherie Wood's 2018 State of the City Address

- Thank you SSL Honor Guard and Fire Chief Ron Morris for drawing us together in reverence for our country.
- Thank you Reverend McVicker for bringing our community together for a moment of prayer
- Thank you Rick Taggart for being a classy emcee

Welcome to the 2018 State of the City Address and Best of South Salt Lake Awards!

First, I want to recognize the most important people in my life:

- My three sons, Jordan, Jayden and Jaxson
- My mom and dad, Lucille and Everett Taylor
- My siblings and support network

Thank you to the City Council for being a part of our city's progress. We are joined today by Sharla Beverly, and Ray deWolfe, would you please stand.

And I want to recognize the other council members:

Ben Pender, Corey Thomas, Portia Mila, Shane Siwik and Mark Kindred.

I also want to welcome other hard-working elected officials who represent our city and are here today: Senator Gene Davis and County Council Member Aimee Winder Newton.

Today, we celebrate our accomplishments while we enjoy a delicious lunch. I want to give special thanks to Sauté for catering with the support of their culinary training program, and Cakes d'Fleur for the fabulous cupcakes, which are still my favorite dessert.

We are gathered with friends and neighbors in one of the historic spaces in the community -- the Columbus Center. This building exemplifies what is great about South Salt Lake, and turned 100 years old last year. This year the city turns 80, the fire department turns 75, the Chamber of Commerce turns 60, and Granite Park Junior High is now 90 years old. So it's a big year for our little community!

When people ask me what I'm most proud of in South Salt Lake, I tell them our dedicated and hard-working city employees and our tight-knit small-town community.

First, let me tell you about our dedicated city employees.

South Salt Lake has 240 full-time and 160 part-time employees. These are the people that keep our children safe, our roads clean, our water running, our toilets flushing, our garbage removed, our parks beautiful and our seniors connected and happy.

They do a tremendous job. I am proud of the way they care about their jobs and how far they'll go beyond their 8 to 5 responsibilities to care for our residents and businesses.

Let me share a few stories:

- This past holiday season, Officer Jerry Silva and Officer Chad Leetham discovered that a Granite Park student who attends PAL at Central Park, was living in a van with his mother and five siblings.

Both Officer Silva and Officer Leetham immediately identified resources for

the family through Promise SSL and arranged for hotel lodging, so the family wouldn't spend the holidays in their car. On Christmas Day, Officer Leetham invited this sweet family to his home for Christmas dinner.

- Another story comes from the streets division. An elderly resident came into my office a few weeks ago and said she needed to get rid of a couch. My staff talked to her about the various options and she decided that perhaps she could rent a dumpster and have the couch hauled away. But when we called the Streets Division Manager, Dave Alexander, he took matters into his own hands and sent his crew to her house. They loaded the couch into their truck and took it away, and saved her the money and time renting a dumpster.
- The last story...each holiday season our community rallies around those in need. This effort has been for years coordinated by our Youth City Council. This past December, I witnessed this effort on steroids. Last fall we were approached by Heart and Hands, a community driven effort of residents with the goal of 'Loving and lifting our neighbors during the holidays! They delivered in big ways – Over 70 families received gifts, this is three times our usual outreach! This effort took the talents of my staff to bring it to reality and over 400 individuals benefited because of our dedicated employees. Edward Lopez, Emily Mead, Julie Taylor, Keith Keyser, Paola Salmon and the Promise Staff all pitched in. Need lists were compiled and distributed, gift collection literally filled every corner of the Promise office, gifts were delivered all hours of the day and night. It was a bright season and an awe inspiring feat to see in action. Thank you to all who participated!

I can't talk about our employees without mentioning our 2017 rock stars.

- Arturo Quintero - Public Assets
- Brad Davis - Urban Livability
- Brandis Stockman - Promise
- Carolyn Schefski - Justice Court

- Jentry Hedin - Recreation
- Sheri Miller - Finance
- Paul Sharp - Public Works
- Jim Hignite - Community Development
- Daniel Hernandez, Kristen Thompson, and Tina Orme - Victim Advocates in the Police Department

These employees were selected by their department heads for going above and beyond their normal duties.

The second thing I'm most proud of is being part of a small city with big city benefits.

Consider this. We are a city of only 25,000 people, but we have access to all the things the Valley has to offer: Great neighborhoods and parks, excellent transportation options, and close proximity to recreation, shopping, cultural events and night life.

We also have seven City Council members for our 25,000 residents. Compare that to Salt Lake City which has seven council members and 190,000 residents. You are well-represented and you have the ability to truly influence the future of our city. We need to remember how great it is to be a small town and how important it is to fight for it.

The State of the City is one of my favorite events because I get to review successes of 2017 and share goals for 2018. 2017 was a great year. We enjoyed the realization of several years of visioning, planning and hard work by the City Council and our City employees. Some 2017 successes include:

- The Fire Department acquired three new state-of-the art ambulances to better respond to emergencies.

- Two new City Council members were elected: Corey Thomas from District 2 & Ray deWolfe, Council member at large, and we welcomed back Sharla Beverly who was re-elected to District 3.
- WinCo grocery store and The Pie Pizzeria opened
- Beautiful new residential developments opened, including Sharon Gardens senior housing and MODA, a 32-unit town-home community along the S-Line.
- A 2-mile section of Parley's Trail opened in October and we completed the long-awaited improvements at Central Park including the most sought-after swing in the City.
- Perhaps most exciting for me was news about the former Granite High property. I am so pleased to announce that the door was closed on Walmart and instead a door opened for a County library.

2017 also had its challenges.

As you know, last March we were chosen as a location for a new homeless resource center. The City Council and I were equally surprised by this news and did everything in our control to fight for our City. We held press conferences, created an online campaign, and rallied residents to attend public meetings.

One of the proudest moments I've had in my 8 years as Mayor, was during our final plea to the Site Selection Committee at the Utah State Capitol on March 22. I arrived at the Capitol and was awe-struck by more than 400 of our residents and businesses that congregated in and poured out of the meeting room. The Capitol facilities staff had to open four additional rooms to accommodate the overflow. I was so proud to have my friends and neighbors there for my speech. And when I said that "South Salt Lake stands together to say we deserve more and we will

fight to get more,” cheers and applause erupted throughout the building and brought tears to my eyes.

We were disappointed to be ultimately selected for the location of the new resource center. But my staff went into action and identified resources needed to mitigate its potential impacts, so we could ask for assistance from the State Legislature.

Senator Davis has been at the state capitol for 20 years, and always looks out for South Salt Lake. We are fortunate he has worked his way up to Senate Minority Leader and represents our city with vision and tact. This year Senator Davis sponsored Senate Bill 235 and fought hard to get us \$2.6 million per year for 12 police officers and 12 firefighters, needed to mitigate the impacts of the homeless resource center.

He brought many people onto the bill’s support list and it passed with 2/3 majority at 10:35 PM, on day 45 of the legislative session. We are fortunate to have Senator Davis standing firmly by our side. Thank you, Senator Davis you are our 2018 Community Champion!

This was a huge effort of many of my staff, so I want to thank them publicly: Hannah Vickery, Randy Sant, Jodi Hoffman, Christine Richman, Dave Spatafore, and Ashley Spatafore. This team sacrificed their personal time and lost sleep, over the 45 days of the session.

The City will also benefit from a 1/2 million dollar appropriation for recreation improvements to the section of the Jordan River in SSL, and an ongoing half million dollars every year for safety and maintenance along the parkway.

Congratulations everyone for a great 2017!

Now let’s talk about the future.

My cabinet and I recently completed a strategic planning process and identified five priorities for the future:

1. Invest in People
2. Create a strong, stable foundation
3. Support existing and recruit new businesses
4. Ensure safe, vibrant neighborhoods and business districts
5. Strengthen our position as a healthy, creative and productive city.

First, Invest in People. My philosophy for leading and governing is centered on investing in people. That's why I believe so strongly in our Promise program.

As we continue the work of Promise, we will invest even more in the people of our community. Here are a few initiatives for 2018:

- We know from tragic suicide rates nationally and locally that students are being bullied for their gender identity and their race, and do not feel safe. We will support diversity and equity for our residents and our employees with the new SSL Equity Council. This council will help us to develop better ways to support EVERY individual and EVERY child in our schools and in our community.
- We have convened the new SSL Interfaith Council comprised of local church leaders who have come together to address literacy in our community. These leaders serve as liaisons – to ensure that services the City and our partners provide get to those who need them most.
- We will invest in our kids with the new Riverfront Elementary School. For the first time since I was a child, Granite School District has come to the city with

plans to open a new school, not to close one. Our Promise partnership has paid off in a very big way.

- We will invest in our seniors and older adults through arts programs, recently funded by the City Council.
- We are currently lining up donations now for 100 kids to receive bikes this summer, plus helmets, and training so they can be “Ready to Ride” and access all the opportunities in their city.

Second, We will create a strong, stable foundation for the City, made up of bricks and mortar, streets and roads, and other basic services vital to quality growth and progress.

In 2018, many new projects will come on line to ensure our safety, mobility and sustainability. Projects include:

- Completion of a new stoplight at 400 East and the S-Line
- The City's first bike loop
- Striped bike lanes on 2700 South
- and a kids’ bike training course at Fitts Park.
- We will continue to improve sustainability with new green waste recycling.
- We will implement phases of the new lighting master plan to make the city safer and more welcoming at night.
- One of the most important facets to a City’s stable foundation is new revenue. I’m pleased to report that WinCo has already generated an estimated ¼ million dollars in sales tax.

This leads me to our third priority which is to Support existing, and recruit new businesses.

This is important for several reasons. We want residents to have quality businesses, services, and access to jobs close to home. We are always looking for tax-revenue generating businesses to support city services.

I'm excited to announce that HB369 passed, which will allow TESLA's only Utah dealership to sell from its South Salt Lake location. We estimate that approximately \$80,000 a year in sales tax will be generated for SSL from this world-renowned auto maker.

There are many exciting initiatives to come in 2018 -- all designed to bring additional businesses and vitality to our city. But I want to focus on two:

- First, the South Salt Lake Arts Council and Chamber of Commerce are shaping a Creative Industries Zone around the water tower. This neighborhood already has a wealth of small industrial buildings perfect for start-ups -- Artists, craftsmen and creative businesses. This year, Beehive Distilling, Saltfire Brewery, and a second location of the State Room concert venue, called "The Commonwealth Room" will open, adding more nightlife to the mix. The Arts Council has also raised funds to pay noted local artists to paint murals on 10 downtown businesses to spruce up their buildings and attract new customers.
- Second, "Opportunity South Salt Lake" – a six month planning and visioning process will bring businesses, development and government leaders together to Identify new and innovative economic opportunities for our city. It's also a chance for residents to get involved and help shape the City's future. Look for information coming soon about how to get involved.

Our fourth priority is Safe, vibrant neighborhoods and business districts

Let's talk about safety. I heard your concerns about safety this past campaign season, and will make sure this is a city priority.

I mentioned earlier that the Legislature provided funding for 12 new officers and 12 new firefighters to mitigate impacts of the homeless resource center. This will increase our public safety presence by 20 PERCENT!

In addition, Police Chief Jack Carruth and I will bring together various community members and leaders to create the Community Safety Coalition. These bi-monthly meetings will combine neighborhood watch and business watch with direct access to the chief so we can quickly and effectively address issues of community concern. The first meeting will be held April 19th at 6 PM here at the Columbus Center.

Now let's talk about community vibrancy. We will see major progress in three areas this year:

- First is the former Granite High property. You likely have seen the 76 homes under construction. Next year, construction will begin on a beautiful county library. This state-of-the-art facility and community gathering place is the most appropriate replacement for Granite High. Thank you all for fighting for what our community needed most.
- Second, we'll see progress Downtown when nearly 500 new residents move into new town homes and apartments, and two breweries and other small businesses come on the scene.
- And finally, the Riverfront neighborhood keeps getting bigger and better. In addition to 400 new homes and apartments built in the past few years. This year, they will see plans for a new elementary school and proposed homes for 300 additional residents.

The fifth priority is to strengthen our City's position as a healthy, creative and productive City.

We all know that South Salt Lake is a wonderful place to start a business or a family, but we want others to know that as well. We want to be known as a diverse and interesting City with a night life and enjoyable community events.

Here are just a few of the events and activities planned for 2018:

- We're jumping on the Food Truck bandwagon with "Lunch on the Move"; we will have a different food truck each month at City Hall. The first will be Lloyd's BBQ food truck, from 11-1 next Wednesday, March 28.
- We'll continue Cool Summer Nights with movies in Fitts Park and will add a Bike Rodeo during the event
- The downtown Mural Fest will launch during the third annual Night on Commonwealth, with local dance, music, art, food and drink.
- The second Creative Convergence workshop will bring creative people and businesses together with South Salt Lake's one-of-a-kind-synergy.

South Salt Lake IS a great place to live and work. You and I know this, but sometimes the rest of the world just needs to hear it. I need your help telling our story. Because a huge part of positioning South Salt Lake as a creative and vibrant City is how we talk about it.

Every year, we present the Best of South Salt Lake awards to share these stories. I ask you today to take the time to acquaint yourself with a few of these people and places so you can spread the word, and help invest in the people who make this city special.

AWARDS PROGRAM BEGINS

I leave you with one final thought from Kenneth H. Blanchard, "The best minute you spend is the one you invest in people."

Thank you for all of the times you have invested in the people of South Salt Lake – it is truly paying off.