

Good evening.

History is rife with examples of societies that find themselves in uncharted circumstances, periods without a prescribed path forward. Times where struggle or calamity, exploration or technological advances make the world unrecognizable. During those turning points, the path forward has always been charted by people who recognize the newness of where they find themselves, and rather than retreat or resist, they lean in, with a wholehearted spirit of curiosity, to blaze a new trail.

I believe that's where our community finds itself today. Coming out of a global pandemic, nationwide economic instability, and reckoning with centuries of racial injustice. Perhaps we've all been feeling the associated novelty of this time in history.

No one is going to give us a roadmap. But I believe that as Salt Lakers, as westerners, we're ready to consider this last year a valuable education and pull together as we move ahead to make this place more welcome, dynamic, and a secure home for all its residents.

The City's fiscal year 2021-22 budget is the foundation of that work, and I am excited to present it to you today as I share my vision for a Salt Lake City that balances providing the essential services we're known for and upon which our residents and businesses rely, with the creation of an abundant, transformational, equitable future for all our communities.

This budget won't get us all the way there. There will always be more needs than the City alone can respond to. But this budget, just like the past year, is unique in the history of our city. In addition to our usual funding streams, we've also received federal investments through President Biden's American Rescue Plan. Coupled with increased bond capacity, and the fact that Salt Lake City is the capital city in the fastest-growing state in the nation, we find ourselves at a new frontier, an historic and critical point in time.

The fact is, we face a truly unprecedented opportunity, one born of historic challenges and fiscal responsibility, but we have the chance to make a once-in-a-generation investment in our City and its people.

This budget begins the work of seizing this moment for our future.

Going into the next fiscal year, Salt Lake City Corporation finds itself in a relatively strong financial position, despite the serious budgetary implications brought on by all that 2020 entailed.

By 'strong' I mean that because we were conservative and judicious last year, we will not be making any staffing or service cuts in the coming year.

'Strong' also means that any funding gaps we are facing due to revenue shortfalls will be filled through our fund balance, also known as our City's rainy-day fund.

This year's General Fund budget is just under \$350 million and it represents our commitment to providing you with clean drinking water, repaired roads, waste and recycling collection, parks and public lands, emergency services and so much more at our current or expanded staffing levels.

That we are in this position after all the pivoting we did last year is remarkable and it's thanks to judicious department directors and well-run divisions that we were able to redirect and absorb many unanticipated costs.

In addition to our own pragmatic and responsible governance, we're here because our economy has remained strong and has even grown in the past year.

According to the Wall Street Journal, no metropolitan area in the nation expanded the size of its labor force more on a percentage basis than our very own Capital City in 2020. What's more, we had the lowest average unemployment rate and the highest share of people working or looking for jobs.

This positive economic outlook is true for the entire state of Utah, and it promises continued job growth, expanded opportunity and greater prosperity for our residents.

When I took office in January 2020, I told you that my Administration would focus its efforts on three priority areas that had the potential to transform our City:

- Prioritizing growth that equitably benefits ALL city residents
- Making our city more environmentally resilient and sustainable; and
- Bolstering our communities with inclusive and equitable opportunities for all

As we entered 2021, I added a fourth pillar:

- Supporting City employees' physical, mental, and economic wellbeing, because our City team is what makes everything possible.

This budget was built with these four pillars in mind. I'm going to hand it over to a few of our fabulous City employees to walk you through some of this year's budget highlights.

By capitalizing on efficiencies, we'll be able to implement a concrete roadway maintenance program for the first time in the city's history. And we're going to apply 155 lane miles of asphalt surface treatment this year. We're building a life-cycle approach to roads to preserve today's investments, reduce future carbon emissions, and lower costs for the next generation of city dwellers.

If 2020 taught us anything it's that Salt Lake City should be prepared for any disaster; natural or man-made. Combining the efforts of both trained city employees and informed residents, we can overcome

any challenges. New investments in Salt Lake City's Emergency Management will pay dividends when our resiliency is tested in the future.

In 2021, we are doubling down on transformative capital investments. We will ask for your support to utilize our bonding capacity to make tangible quality of life improvements for all residents, such as investing in West Side park improvements, quieting our railroad crossings, and completing the next phases of our Foothills Trails System master plan.

Public transit is an essential service for many people to get to work, school, doctors' appointments, the grocery store, and more. We are dedicated to improving the entire transit experience, from making physical bus stop improvements to sponsoring frequent service through Rose Park and piloting an innovative microtransit program. These investments will continue to connect our residents to the goods and services they need most.

As the City launches study and implementation of a citywide equity plan, having a team in place to ensure that equity work is not siloed is essential. The Office of Diversity and Human Rights will become the Office of Equity and Inclusion and will start with a 4-person team led by our new Chief Equity Officer.

Sometimes our calls for service involve people who are in crisis. In those moments it is important to have mental health professionals on site to navigate tense and complicated situations. By investing in 6 more mental health professionals, we are better prepared to help those most in need.

Through the Community Commitment Program, we've been able to engage hundreds of our unsheltered neighbors to provide shelter, vaccinations, access to substance abuse treatment, and more. That's why we're going to keep working with service providers and community partners on this enhanced outreach program by fully funding and making permanent the Community Commitment Program moving forward.

Over the past 9 months, the Commission on Racial Equity in Policing has worked with the community, the Salt Lake City Police Department, and city officials on how to make thoughtful and necessary change in how our City does police work. We've made recommendations on crisis training, diversity in recruitment, and School Resource Officers, to name a few, and our work will continue to make Salt Lake City safer for all.

As we work to balance growth and preservation of our diverse community fabric it is important for the City to ensure housing choice and equity for all our residents. The Gentrification Assessment and Displacement Mitigation study will serve as a catalyst to further break down the systemic inequities in Salt Lake City.

By helping fund the Community Renewable Energy Program, Salt Lake City is supporting the development of local clean energy technologies like solar, wind, energy efficiency, battery storage and more-- and it's putting our city on the path to becoming a "net-100%" renewable electricity community.

Our open spaces are not a luxury, they are essential. As our City continues to grow, planning for the future of our public lands will require a coordinated effort. That's why a new city Public Lands Department is essential - it will prioritize involving constituents in the ongoing design, planning and management of our beloved outdoor resources.

Between improving air quality, carbon sequestration, and energy savings, the trees of Salt Lake City's urban forest return more than \$5 million in benefits annually. That's why we're adding an additional 1,000 trees, and the benefits they provide, to the City's westside this year and every year of this administration.

New living wage estimates indicate a person would need to make \$15.11 per hour in order to afford their basic needs in Salt Lake County. We're committed to supporting the well-being of all City employees, and this includes a plan for implementing an increase to the City's living wage through a phased approach.

Our 911 dispatchers are our FIRST responders. They work long, harrowing hours as the reassuring voice on the other end of the line when people need help. By instituting a first of its kind scheduling model, we are poised to give these essential employees regularly scheduled time off to de-stress and reset so that they can be their best when you need them.

Through the course of our work, we encounter some of life's hardest, most tragic moments. Having a full-time clinician on staff will help our department's employees to process stressful situations, be present for our families and friends, and show up each day at our best.

Salt Lake City is run by dedicated professionals, and I'm so glad you got to hear about these projects straight from the people who work so hard to keep our City running.

These investments will bolster the City's reputation as a desirable place to live, a year-round destination for travel, and an international hub for winter sport. As we continue to modernize the city's infrastructure for the benefit of our everyday living, we are also excited that we'll be well-positioned to host global events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, again. All things that have clearly had a positive, long-lasting impact on our community and will for future generations and decades to come.

I want to go into a little more depth about my budget proposal in several areas.

First, policing and public safety.

Last year, following the nationwide protests of racial injustice, we formed the Commission on Racial Equity in Policing. This body operates independently of elected leaders, and it was tasked with closely examining our police department policies, culture, and budget to look for inequities and ways to improve.

They released their first recommendations in January, and I'm so grateful for their inclusive, careful, and studied approach. These important recommendations and the Commission's ongoing work represent a new chapter of policing in Salt Lake City and will bolster and edify our already impressive department.

I'm proposing funding of over \$200,000 for additional equity, inclusion, and diversity training for our police officers, as well as the creation of a new senior-level position in my office to liaise with our education partners on equity and justice issues, including how School Resource Officers work.

I'm proposing \$20,000 for the Peer Court program, offering alternative ways for youth to be held accountable for their actions, outside of the criminal justice system.

I'm proposing that our police department includes a full-time, in-house clinician for our police officers to work with, to help ensure that they are getting the mental health care they need to process and cope with the difficult experiences required by their jobs.

I'm also particularly excited about what Commissioner Verona Sagato-Mauga announced earlier.

Heeding the recommendations of the Commission on Racial Equity in Policing, my budget includes funding for six additional social workers for our Community Connection Center.

There are emergency situations where a trained mental health professional is a more appropriate first responder than a police officer, but right now we don't have enough social workers to cover every shift.

This change will get us closer to ensuring there is always a social worker on shift to respond to emergency calls. It's a program that's been incredibly successful and the department and the City's residents will be better for its expansion.

Second, affordable housing.

This budget includes more than \$11 million for affordable housing through a variety of projects and programs. As our City has grown and changed, housing costs have increased rapidly. Preserving our current affordable housing stock and adding to it is critical to ensure that the hard-working people who live here can continue to do so.

Our city and our state have been mired in an affordable housing crisis for quite some time, and the pandemic has only exacerbated it. We know this is a priority to city residents and we are committed to continue treating it as such.

Combining Fiscal Year 22 revenues with existing resources, the city's Redevelopment Agency will have a total of \$10.4 million to increase the supply of affordable housing by funding the construction and preservation of nearly 350 affordable units, with at least 116 of those being rented at rates affordable to those making 50% or less of the Area Median Income.

The RDA has put forth a strategy that will leverage these funds through its Housing Development Loan Program, strategic acquisition of properties - such as distressed motels - located within any RDA project area, and a pilot accessory dwelling unit, or ADU program, targeted for the 9 Line Project Area.

In addition, our Housing and Neighborhood Development Team will disperse nearly \$4.5 million through federal housing programs to help people right here in our community. These programs help families quickly regain stable housing following a crisis or homelessness. They're also designed to help those living with HIV/Aids and their families secure housing, and enable the City to buy, and rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership and provide direct rental assistance to low-income individuals.

Third, homelessness.

Last fall, we launched the Community Commitment Program on a trial basis. The CCP is aimed toward connecting unsheltered residents to services and keeping our public areas clean, safe, and accessible to everyone. In this year's budget, I propose to permanently fund the Community Commitment Program and build on its success. This means that, in addition to the millions the City's able to allocate through federal grants and other funding to homeless services every year, I'm proposing an additional amount of nearly \$1 million to go toward public safety and outreach coordination to assist our unsheltered residents.

Last week I announced that the City will partner with The Other Side Academy to build a tiny home village for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. One goal in my 2021 plan was to have tiny homes in place by this upcoming Winter. Getting an operator and manager on board as a partner was one of the biggest milestones to meeting that goal, and I'm excited that we reached this place so quickly.

Tiny homes can be an addition to the resources we bring to our work to help people experiencing homelessness. It can also have an important, long-lasting impact on the chronically unsheltered segment of our homeless population, in particular the people for whom resource centers are not a desirable solution.

These homes will create a self-reliant, peer-supported village that provides a safe, dignified and uplifting life for the chronically unsheltered, and which brings them and the larger community into mutually ennobling relationships. Support services will be readily available and will be key in helping these members of our community gain the stability and security they need to move into permanent and safe solutions.

In The Other Side Academy we have a partner that is devoted to the success and empowerment of its current students. They have a proven track record of successfully managing a peer-based community

while being an asset to their neighborhood and the city as a whole. And I know that devotion and that passion for success will carry over into their work on The Other Side Village.

This is a bold, new, first-in-our-state model, and we're invested in the success of this community with the goal that it can expand, and also that it can influence and inform future tiny home communities around the state.

Fourth, sustainability.

You've already heard from some of our team members about some of the sustainability projects we're excited to tackle, but the City is doing so much more.

Sustainability isn't the job of a single department, but it's a central focus of every division and team. We're focusing on engaging community members that have not historically been included in program and policy discussions to reach renewable energy and climate goals and improve access to healthy food. My budget proposes a number of significant steps forward, including \$325,000 for the implementation of our 100% Community Renewable Energy Program. This investment means that we are turning the ambition of a 100% renewable energy goal into a reality—with all of the legal, expert, and regulatory work that it entails.

We're also allocating \$200,000 for our Renewable Energy and Climate Equity Plan. This climate and equity planning process will help us achieve our climate goals while also improving the lives of vulnerable and historically marginalized residents.

We'll also be spending \$85,000 working with air quality partners and scientists to place additional air quality monitors in our city to provide more granular data, by council district, on current air quality conditions. The city will develop a public facing dashboard and a mobile application that residents can use to plan outdoor activities according to current air quality conditions.

We've also committed \$175,000 to identify critical challenges, unmet needs, existing assets, and key opportunities for building a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient food system.

This year's budget includes an additional funding stream: federal stimulus dollars being sent to cities to help residents and businesses who've been hurt financially by the COVID-19 pandemic. I know that many Salt Lake City residents continue to struggle from the economic and health effects of the harrowing past year. Childcare remains a challenge, as does affordable housing, internet access, food insecurity, and access to health care.

The \$87 million Salt Lake City will receive from the American Rescue Plan Act is a tremendous opportunity that we will invest equitably in our communities. Our comprehensive plan will not only take care of our city's fiscal health and the well-being of our city family; it will help spark the post-pandemic

renaissance through pathways to employment, invigoration of business and cultural districts, neighborhood revitalization, and more. I can't wait to share more with you about it on June 1st.

Another unique opportunity we have this year is significant bonding capacity for important and exciting capital projects in every part of our City that can be accomplished without raising taxes on homeowners.

In fact, this budget includes plans for the new, Community Reinvestment Bond, which will allow for \$50 million in new capital projects that have long been requested by residents and have been waiting in our stacks of detailed master plans for the right opportunity. These projects have the potential to transform outdoor enjoyment and recreation for our residents citywide.

For starters, this proposal includes \$10 million to convert the dilapidated former water park on City property located at 1200 West 1700 South into a premiere regional park. It is long-since time that our Westside neighborhoods have a park of the caliber of Liberty or Sugar House park.

Last year the City acquired Allen Park, and this bond would enable us to create the city's first of its kind artist-in-residency program using some of the existing homes and buildings on site. This retrofit would honor the history and the culture of this special place.

This bond would also make it possible for us to shore-up other historic buildings in the City so they can be reutilized, like the building at Warm Springs Park in the Marmalade District, and the Fisher Mansion in Poplar Grove.

Other plans for the bond include:

- The implementation of the Foothills Trails System Plan
- Storage and equipment to Reutilize wood from downed trees in the city
- The Complete Street Transformation of 600 North
- Improvements to the Jordan River
- Multilingual Wayfinding Signage in our parks and open spaces
- and Westside Neighborhood Park improvements

One final component of the Community Reinvestment Bond I'm excited about is a long-awaited plan to quiet all train horns on the west side of Salt Lake City. Our west side communities have long been disproportionately affected by the noise pollution caused by trains traveling through our city. Through this bond, we will fund the infrastructure improvements needed to create quiet zones and safe train crossings so that all nearby residents can have a calmer, quieter quality of life.

To think that we can provide all this value that residents have been asking for years but without them paying a single extra cent is a remarkable and huge opportunity. Our outdoor community, our proximity to the mountains, it's what sets our City apart, and these investments in our public lands and spaces reflect that.

We have an opportunity to make the kind of transformational change that may only come around once in a generation. I'm committed to seizing that opportunity and doing it in a way that will benefit everyone. Equity can and must guide our work.

I truly believe we're on the cusp of a new path for Salt Lake City.

The path may have been born of crises and difficulty. But through strategic local and national investments we can help offer stability to our residents who need it most, while also putting into motion some of the plans that have long been in place for improving the quality of life for entire neighborhoods throughout our city.

I invite you to take a closer look at my proposed budget by visiting slc.gov/2021Budget. Every line item is visible and accounted for. It's based on thousands of comments we've received in the last year from constituents about what they value, and we've worked hard to make sure as many of those good ideas were honored.

Through all that 2020 taught and took from us, it's also offered us a new future. Salt Lake City's good management and fiscal responsibility have also helped open doors to the future we *must* take hold of. We are on our way with this budget and the future is bright, Salt Lake City. Take care.