

CITY OF GRESHAM

Mayor Shane T. Bemis
State of the City Address
February 17, 2016

Thank you, Lynn, for that kind introduction, and for your career of service to our state and our local community. When I think about the human infrastructure in our region, I think about people like Lynn Snodgrass, who work so tremendously hard to be exceptional community stewards wherever they are. I also want to thank Lynn for her leadership, which I have always greatly appreciated.

A huge thank you also to the Chamber of Commerce for co-hosting this event with us for the first time. I have been very impressed with the Chamber's progress, and I remain convinced that a strong Chamber of Commerce is an absolutely critical part of a strong community.

I have probably told you this story enough times over the years that many of you are getting tired of hearing it, but you'll have to be patient with me, because I can't not tell it. I am convinced that if it were not for the Gresham Chamber of Commerce, my first business in Gresham would have never made it. After leveraging every possible resource I had just to get the open sign lit, I had exactly nothing remaining for advertising and promotions. So, I worked the Chamber, and worked it hard. I'd go to Friday AMs and give away some pizzas, hand out coupons, and encourage my fellow Chamber members to give us a try. So, thank you.

Without fail, the phone would start ringing at lunch time—mostly calls from Chamber members, and then Friday night I would have a steady stream of Chamber members ordering pizza, giving me their business, and more importantly, giving me a future. I will simply never forget how important this organization has been to my success and remains to the success of all of our small businesses and our local economy.

Be it the Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, our churches, Rotaries, Elks clubs, school PTAs, neighborhoods or community groups, the social fabric I just described is the capital that pays dividends in every possible way across our city. It pays in the health of an economy, the health of our families, and our sense of livability and belonging. So once again, let me start this annual address by expressing my gratitude for those strong bonds in our community and for everything this City has meant to me since I came here as a freshman in high school, with no relationships and no connections.

The State of the City is one of my favorite annual events because it gives me the opportunity to share some of the outstanding things we have going on in our community, while also trying to forecast a bit about the challenges that are ahead. Before I get too far down the road with this year's conversation, I do want to take a moment to recognize our strong community leadership, starting with the members of our City Council. As a team, we have made the purposeful effort to operate in the style of a Board of Directors for a \$220 million dollar enterprise, because that is exactly what we are. Council President Palmero, and Councilors Echols, Hinton, French,

CITY OF GRESHAM

Stegmann and Widmark are some of the finest individuals I have ever worked with. In an era when local government leadership is too often defined by rancor, discord, political struggles and sometimes pub fights, our team is a shining example of cooperation, disagreement with respect, and hearts that are absolutely focused on the community and our outcomes, as opposed to political football. Please join me in thanking our City Councilors for their leadership.

In addition to our City Councilors, we are joined today by some special guests and partners and from around the region.

Recognize elected and appointed officials

Recognize family

Since this is the Chamber of Commerce, I'll start this year's address by speaking to some of our recent economic progress. No matter how we slice it, 2015 was a really solid economic year. Raise your hand if you've ever heard me talk about the Gresham Vista Industrial Park, near On Semiconductor? That's right. For years I have been saying how close we are to landing major economic investment on this prime industrial parcel. Our partners at the Port of Portland were absolutely instrumental in wrestling this parcel out of passive ownership in 2011. They worked incredibly hard to market the site and joined with us in our efforts to bring jobs and investment to the community. There is no question that the Port is an absolute key partner in our efforts on this site.

I am incredibly proud this year to say that Subaru's Master Distribution Center marks our first large-scale investment on Vista, with their 600,000 square foot facility and \$33 million dollar investment. And, as you can see on this slide, we still have a lot of land remaining for further industrial investment, and I remain convinced that we will be talking about progress on this site during State of the City Addresses for years to come.

I do want to pause for just a moment to recognize, on scale, how big of a deal Subaru is. This was our largest industrial recruitment in more than 10 years and was the second-largest new traded sector construction project in the entire Portland metropolitan region in 2015 –second only, I might add, to Intel's expansion.

Subaru was far from our only advancement in the economic development arena. In total, we had 22 industrial expansions, eight new manufacturing buildings, we issued 291 business licenses (a 27 percent increase over the previous year), and we welcomed 16 new traded-sector companies to Gresham. In 2014 we had 319,000 square feet of new commercial construction. In 2015? Over triple that amount at over one million square feet. When it comes to jobs, 2015 was a good year for us.

That was not by accident. You may remember from last year's State of the City that I spoke about the importance of codifying all of our various economic development incentives and aggressive approaches to be able to present companies with a universe of confidence and

CITY OF GRESHAM

knowledge that other communities simply cannot provide. That work set the stage for us to offer the most aggressive industrial review guarantee for planning and building reviews in Oregon, by adopting, in code, that they will be conducted within a 66-day period. For companies like Subaru, time and money are synonymous, so when it came down to selecting where to locate, we rose to the top of the stack.

In addition to the 66-day review, we implemented a second round of the Garage to Storefront program, this time focused on additional building improvements, and spearheaded the early stages of our Centers and Corridors project, which you will continue to hear about in years to come, as it helps us attract redevelopment, commercial investment and additional retail amenities in key areas of Gresham.

Our growth rate in business investment is cause for great optimism. In 2014, we had a healthy \$71 million in new business projects added to Gresham. In the past year, 2015, we saw that number more than double to \$155 million in business project valuation. That gives you some idea of the magnitude of the year we had.

We have certainly been fortunate to see some improvement in the regional economy, but that improvement does not, alone, explain the progress we are making. This City Council's business acumen, unified approach and aggressiveness has positioned us well, and under the leadership of Erik Kvarsten, one of the best City Managers in the country, our dedicated City staff continues to force the bounds of creativity and deliver exceptional results. I want to tell you a little something about Erik Kvarsten. He is one of the finest professionals, personally and professionally, I've ever met. He's not one to put himself in the spotlight, but I think it's important for you to know. I know for a fact he's been recruited heavily by other cities, including Salem, but he has turned them down.

That creativity and persistence should pay off handsomely this year, as progress on the Catalyst Site, now referred to as "Rockwood Rising," reaches a new high. We now have a developer on board who has been extremely successful in similar projects across the region, and we are starting design this spring for several new buildings on the site. Not only will the physical development that occurs on the site help boost the urban form in the neighborhood, but the actual functions that will occur on the site will, at the direction of the Redevelopment Commission, be focused directly on innovation, technology, jobs and employment, small-format commerce, food and community.

While there are a number of bright spots on the economic development and growth front, we continue to focus on some long-needed growth areas in Gresham such as opportunities for our youth, homelessness prevention and law enforcement, and neighborhood livability. In last year's speech you heard me say that my top growth priority for Gresham rests with our children and families. I am very excited to discuss our growth in this arena today. To set up the discussion, please turn your attention to the screen for a short video about our progress:

CITY OF GRESHAM

[Video]

As you saw in the video, the past two years in Gresham have been ground-shifting in youth engagement. We have now wrapped up the second year of our Summer Kids in the Parks program, with very promising results. Our SKIP program is a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club, which has been a tremendous addition to service provision in Gresham, and will only grow in its positive influence as they near the construction of their service center in Rockwood. In 2014 we had a daily average of 91 kids participating in SKIP programming at three parks in Gresham, which was a solid number considering that it was, more or less, the only recreational programming we had done in Gresham in around 15 years. In 2015, that number increased by nearly 50% to 135 daily participants.

The video also showed our very successful Friday night basketball program for at-risk youth. This program remains near and dear to my heart, and I am abundantly excited to announce today that we will be expanding that program in 2016 to include an additional night, Saturdays, at the beautiful new location of Friends of the Children adjacent to Pat Pfeifer Park.

Friends just celebrated their grand opening of this amazing new asset, and very few things excite me as much about our hope for reaching our most vulnerable children as much as this organization does. The proof is in their data: 83 percent of the youth in their program graduate on time, although 60% have a parent who did not graduate high school; 93% avoid the juvenile justice system, although 50% have parents who were incarcerated; and 98% have avoided early parenting, despite the fact that 85% were born to teen mothers. They are the best in the business.

In addition to our growth in SKIP and late-night basketball, we have also been hard at work to expand the physical amenities for youth as well. Under the leadership of one of Gresham's youngest leaders, Ricki Ruiz, we were able to turn the former roller-hockey rink at Vance Park, a blighted eyesore, into two beautiful new futsal courts.

[slide showing before and after]

Now, if you haven't heard Ricki's story yet, you're in for a treat. This young man grew up in Rockwood and can tell you stories of jumping the fence at the old roller rink with his friends to play futsal on the dilapidated asphalt, often using backpacks and schools books to form rough goals. If you've met Ricki, you'll know that two things become immediately clear. He is contagiously optimistic, and he's a solid young leader. He put together a plan to make these futsal courts a reality, and he delivered on that plan by enlisting the help of the Portland Timbers, Operation Pitch Invasion and the U.S. Soccer Foundation. The courts were built at almost no cost to the City of Gresham.

[Rolling images of futsal opening]

CITY OF GRESHAM

As the video mentioned, Ricki has been a member of our team for the past year, thanks in large part to the assistance of a SummerWorks grant through Worksystems, Inc. He stands as an example of what is possible when we are able to connect talented local kids here in Gresham with the types of opportunities they need to change the world.

Ricki, please stand so your community can give you a proper thank you.

You know, Ricki could have sat in front of a computer screen and complained on the blogosphere or Nextdoor.com that Gresham doesn't have enough futsal courts. He could have had a bad attitude and joined the visceral blogosphere of "experts" who can point out all of the problems but evaporate when it comes to putting the work in on a solution. Instead, he did the opposite, and we are all better off for that. At the age of 21, Ricki has already made a huge contribution, and I want to tell you, he sits just down the hall from me at City Hall, and I have never once heard him complain. Not once. Good job, Ricki.

While not specifically a "youth program," I don't want to miss the opportunity to mention the blast we had as a community getting together at the Art Festival this summer to crush the Guinness World Record. This effort was spearheaded in part by Gresham's Youth Advisory Committee, which has been an excellent resource for the City. We appreciate their contributions and perspectives, and we appreciate all of the people who came out that day to help us make our way into the record book. Raise your hand if you participated in the "Chalk of Fame." It was so incredible watching Gresham's longstanding families and new residents alike joining together on a blisteringly hot day in July to be a community and be part of something positive.

Gresham's long relationship with the arts through music festivals and community events, like the Art Festival, remains vital and healthy. Under the leadership of Judy Han, the newly-formed Gresham Outdoor Public Arts group is doing tremendous work to bring new works of public art to our city.

I am certainly excited about the opportunities being created for youth and families across Gresham, but I am particularly proud of the reality this slide displays. If you start to watch some of the critical mass of progress we have been making in the greater Rockwood area through the location of Boys and Girls Club, Friends of the Children, Nadaka, Open School, late night basketball, futsal in Vance Park, and the Rockwood Rising Project, you can see the hope we have for the years to come. We must grab that hope and keep our pedal on the momentum. We simply cannot allow gangs to be an alternate family structure for our young residents.

There is no doubt that a strong connection exists between engaging our youth with recreation and opportunities and changing some of our more worrisome outcomes. It is exactly this challenge that sparked our creation of Gresham's Commission on Children and Families last year. The Commission's charge is simultaneously simple and yet incredibly challenging: Discover ways to make Gresham a better place for our youngest residents and their families. The members have been appointed, and they are hard at work researching opportunities.

CITY OF GRESHAM

The Commission is using national best practices and diving into data on our schools, recreational programs and neighborhood safety. Though the committee is about halfway through their inaugural year, and they're still analyzing the numbers to inform their eventual recommendations to Council, the committee is delving deep into the effect of attendance as an indicator of educational success, as well as the geographical distribution and effectiveness of existing afterschool recreation programs. On the subject of safety, a key component of any family friendly community, the Commission is interested in increasing neighborhood connectedness including the Neighbor Ready program, which pairs neighborhood watch with emergency preparedness. I am anxious to hear more about their work and greatly appreciate their heart for Gresham's kids.

Their work will build on the progress made by the Rise, Advance, Dream (RAD) campaign from past years. That effort helped establish some priorities regarding amenities, services and additions to help make Gresham prosper. We now have a universe of ideas on the table and a great group of people poised to find strategic ways to pursue them.

One bright amenity that will soon be added to Gresham's portfolio is the Hogan Butte Nature Park. This is another one I've been speaking about for years because it really will, upon completion, immediately become one of the nicest parks in the entire region, with a staggering view of the Gresham skyline, Mt. Rainier, Mt. Jefferson, Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Adams and the Columbia River Gorge. Hogan Butte was the Trust for Public Lands' top priority for public acquisition, and I am thrilled to report that, at long last, the project is on-pace, and we are scheduled to complete construction by December of this year, with an anticipated community celebration and grand opening to follow.

We have a lot to celebrate, but we also have some significant work ahead and some tough decisions to make. To be perfectly clear, while I am incredibly proud of the youth and family programs and amenities we have developed in the past couple of years, I am not satisfied boasting about services we have cobbled together with bailing wire and duct tape. While it is tempting in these types of speeches to speak to the virtues of our hard work on an issue, while glossing over or ignoring the challenges that are still ahead of us, I think you know by now that I'm not a person who is really interested in sugar coating anything, so I'll strive for balance here.

If we are going to retain our strong families in Gresham, we are going to have to face the harsh reality that we are in competition with every other suburban community in the Portland region. Now, don't get me wrong, we have a ton going for us. If you want to live in a community with an authentic downtown, complete with a local merchant economy, Gresham is your place. If you value historic roots, authentic neighborhoods and classic character, you can't beat us. If you want an affordable house in a livable neighborhood, we're still in first place. Trust me, that's not just rhetoric. Three years ago, during this speech, I spoke about young families moving to Gresham in pursuit of affordable opportunity. At the time, I think some folks thought I was

CITY OF GRESHAM

crazy. But, in 2013, I had a hunch. Now, I have data. In 2015, we had more residential real estate transactions than we have seen in over 10 years, topping even 2006 numbers.

While we have a lot of momentum on our side, I don't want the Commission on Children and Families—or anybody in this room—to ignore our pressing needs. If you want things like a community center, we don't have an answer for you in Gresham, despite most of our peers boasting multiple assets in this category. If you want full-service recreation services with solid programming, we're still behind the mark. Most alarmingly, if you, *like every single parent in the United States of America*, want your kids to get a solid education, the trend-lines aren't necessarily in our favor.

This slide shows an unfortunate reality, but one that we need to collectively own. There are seemingly a million different ways to slice and dice education data, which makes it difficult at times to tell a comprehensive story. One quick way to look at the progress of our schools is to consider the percentage of on-time graduates emerging from our districts and compare that to our peers. As you can see here, we have some work to do.

Here's the thing about schools: In addition to being critically important to the futures of our youth, they are also livability drivers in Gresham's efforts to attract families to our city and keep the families we currently have. If you are cruising Zillow and find out that the elementary school in the neighborhood you are considering is a "one" on a scale of 10, you are, without a doubt, going to keep looking. This, of course, exacerbates the issue, and we get stuck in a self-fulfilling and self-defeating cycle. We all need to rise together, but our elected school boards have a responsibility to own their piece of the solution as well.

You know, Oregon is famous for having delegations from across the country and across the world come to our state to witness our innovative approach to public policy, be it our protection of beaches and natural areas, our leadership on clean energy or innovations in public transportation. Heck, I've even had a dozen or so international delegations come to visit our sewage treatment plant. It's true. To my knowledge, not a single delegation has come to Oregon to learn about our approach to public education. Don't you think that's a problem? Oregon has abysmal education outcomes. There's no other side of the coin on this and no excuse for failure on this at all.

While we clearly have some room for improvement, I know that our elected school leaders are as concerned as we are about changing our outcomes and improving the quality of our schools. And, to be clear, we are ALL going to have to own our pieces of that solution as well.

Ultimately, that's what being a community is all about. We collectively own so much infrastructure and services, from water and sewer pipes to roads and bridges. That collective ownership can be frustrating at times when our individual visions don't align, but it is also refreshing in that it is the only action, on scale, that can appropriately address important needs. It is no secret to anybody in Gresham who has driven much on our residential streets that we have

CITY OF GRESHAM

significant deferred maintenance issues. We have squeezed the last few years to do more residential maintenance than any point in the recent past, but it is a drop in the bucket compared to the need.

My pledge on the City side is that this Council will push incredibly hard on the organization to free up additional existing resources for residential street maintenance, no matter what. While nothing will change our aggressiveness in freeing up existing resources, I want to be perfectly clear that our counterparts at the State of Oregon have been consistently letting us down by not taking action to shore up the funding deficiencies in the revenue streams that traditionally fund street maintenance. At some point, in the continuing absence of state and federal leadership, we will, collectively, have to find a path that works for us here locally to address the deficiencies and solve the problem going forward.

That won't be easy. As you likely know by now, it concerns me that our voters haven't approved revenue in Gresham since the early 1990s. As a lifelong fiscally conservative Republican, I feel qualified to say that isn't some Tea Party, Donald Trump badge of courage. It means we lose while others win. Ironically, that type of defeatist attitude is the same kind of moral bankruptcy that thinks it is compassionate to leave mentally ill and substance-addicted people camping out in our open spaces, parks, sidewalks and neighborhoods.

I'll be perfectly clear: homelessness is a bigger issue in the greater Portland area than it has been since the pioneers on the Oregon Trail moved from their Conestoga wagons into wooden structures. That's not hyperbole; unfortunately, it is reality. It is unconscionable to me that we let our homeless subsist in shantytowns.

That is not the Gresham ethic. For years, Gresham has greeted this issue with compassion and solutions, in an environment that is short on both. This is the city where My Father's House built a family shelter without a single dime of public money. This is a community that has consistently supported Human Solutions in their efforts to rehabilitate people to employment and self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, there are those who would sit back and believe that, for some people, camping out on our trails and in our open spaces is the best they can do.

For context, let me show you what some of these "solutions" look like.

[photo montage]

Now, I feel like I shouldn't have to say that there is obviously nothing humane or acceptable about those images. I have deeply admired Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury's interest in, and leadership on, this issue. She has put the County's money where her mouth is and has pledged a substantial increase in the funding available to tackle homelessness. She has also set aside a modest appropriation for Gresham, which we will use to provide a balance of social work, vocational rehabilitation, clean-up and law enforcement services, starting next month. Chair Kafoury and Commissioner McKeel, once again, thank you for your partnership.

CITY OF GRESHAM

This new program will add to our existing relationship with JOIN, which we have increased in recent years to move people out of homelessness. If you aren't familiar with their work, JOIN is an organization that takes some of the toughest cases and resolves them through a housing-first model. With this combination of efforts, I am confident that we will continue to make progress in getting people housed. Now, that said, we also absolutely will not sit idly by and watch the fallout of this issue destroy our natural resources and threaten our neighborhood livability.

Starting this week, we have implemented a natural resource exclusion along the Springwater Trail, just to the north of Gresham's Southwest Neighborhood. For too long we've watched habitat investments in the millions be threatened by a small group of self-proclaimed "homeless constitutionalists"—whatever that means. Well, that stops now. We will be restricting a 60-acre area to any and all human activity, homeless or not, until such time as the environment can rebound. Hopefully this course of action will provide some relief for the environment, the neighborhood and provide an opportunity to get some of our most society-resistant individuals into stable housing and opportunity.

Homelessness is an overwhelmingly broad societal issue impacting communities across the nation, especially up and down the west coast. As a nation, we have a lot of work to do to change the economic, substance abuse and mental health circumstances that too often lead to homelessness, and we also need to take a close look at some of the legal restrictions that too often tie the hands of local governments to maintain health, safety and order in their communities.

Once again, I don't want to sound uncompassionate on this issue, because I am not. I spent part of my childhood in a mobile home, and many people have it even worse than me. To be clear, my roots are modest. At the same time, I am beyond exasperated by the absurd notion that pitching tents under freeway overpasses or occupying our parks and trails is any sort of solution whatsoever. Those who believe so need to do some deep soul searching and reconnect with the sensible people they represent.

Our approach to homelessness in Gresham is, and will continue to be, compassionate, but it will not be delusional. Our Neighborhood Enforcement Team, very popular already amongst our residents, will get an extra boost, and become the Neighborhood Enhancement Action Team, or NEAT, if you will. If you think that acronym is a little bit too cute, you're right, and you have our retiring Police Chief, Craig Junginger, to thank for that. I'm not quite done with Craig yet, and I'll get back to him in a minute.

The NEAT team is a combination of law enforcement, rental housing inspection, code enforcement and social work that will help us tackle all sorts of livability issues and maintain the line when it comes to protecting our neighborhoods and our shared spaces. Here is a short video that details their incredible impact in the city.

CITY OF GRESHAM

This is just the latest innovation in a department that has been a constant source of creativity and ingenuity, despite limited resources. Though we have fewer officers per capita than nearly every single city in Oregon, we have tremendous law enforcement services, and a department full of men and women who bring professionalism to everything they do.

Ok, back to Craig for just a moment. Chief Junginger is many things to me. He is one of the finest Police Chiefs I have ever encountered, he is an admirable and experienced public servant, he is creative and strategic, he is a strong leader with a thick skin, or mostly thick skin, and a great sense of humor, and since he came here seven years ago, I am proud to say that he is a friend. I'm not a super sentimental guy, you know, but I'll miss Craig—not sure he'll always miss the grief I've caused him, though! Please give Chief Junginger a round of applause and thank him for his exceptional service in Gresham.

While we are on the topic of public safety, I want to recognize that, as a country, we've had some discourse lately about police brutality and abuses of power. I understand that is an issue in some places in the country, even in some places not too far away from us. I had the pleasure of serving on the U.S. Conference of Mayors Working Group of Mayors and Police Chiefs, which provided local government input for the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. This is a complex issue with many issues and challenges.

But, I want to be clear that, in Gresham, we have tremendously professional police officers who impress me both in the incredible restraint they show in their work and in their dogged ability to capture their suspects. If you are hoping to continue your criminal enterprise, I can tell you, emphatically, Gresham is an absolutely horrible place to commit a crime. We will catch you. I promise you.

It is also worth mentioning, in the light of last week's brutal killing of a Seaside police officer, and the 10 police officers nationwide who we have already lost this year, that this is not an "easy" job, and that the men and women who wear the badge and uniform are taking the ultimate risk each and every day they work. I cannot imagine the grief currently being experienced by the family and friends of Officer Jason Goodding, but by all accounts, he was simply one of the best there was. We stand with the citizens of Seaside today as we mourn with them. Please join me in taking a moment of silence to recognize the sacrifice made by Officer Jason Goodding.

[moment of silence]

Thank you. I can tell you, first hand, that Gresham police officers are some of the most tremendous individuals you will ever encounter. Let me tell you about a couple of them. Gresham has a very long and successful relationship with the federal Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, operated through the Department of Justice. We've lobbied for these funds for years, resulting in around 13 full time officers being funded in the past half-dozen years.

CITY OF GRESHAM

Two of the positions funded through that program have been dedicated to School Resource Officers. I want to introduce you today to officers Sweazey and Rasmussen. School Resource Officers are nothing new to Gresham, but having the added capacity to focus these officers specifically on truancy issues has been a real ground-shifter. In a relatively short period of time, these two officers have opened up 90 cases dealing with truant children, around 60 of which have *multiple* at-risk children in the home.

While Sweazey and Rasmussen have been out there trying to keep our children in school and help them be successful, they have not forgotten that they are also law enforcement officers, focused on helping the most vulnerable among us. In two separate situations so far, truancy investigations have brought suspicion that some of our most vulnerable children are being impacted by human trafficking situations.

In the first case, the juvenile the officers were concerned about wasn't even initially their primary focus, but was a friend of a student with attendance issues. The officers put the pieces together and realized she was falling victim to trafficking, and put out an "order of protection" for the young lady, which resulted in her being rescued during her next encounter with law enforcement. She is now receiving treatment, is living clean and sober, and leading a productive life. You ever wonder if cops make a difference? They do.

In the second case, a 16-year-old female wrote in her diary about being forced in to sex trafficking, which was discovered by her mother. Unfortunately, the youth was initially unwilling to cooperate with detectives, which would have, too often, been the end of the story for us. In this case, however, the outcome was different. While the youth was not willing to work with detectives, she did work with our school resource officers, who helped her enter into a GED program specifically for at-risk youth. As part of this program and through intensive counseling, she eventually disclosed the details of her circumstances, and her perpetrator was arrested and prosecuted.

Officers Sweazey and Rasmussen are here with us today. Gentlemen, please stand, and be recognized for your tremendous contribution.

So, just today is another story. An e-mail came in today about officers who responded to a shoplifting call. The items taken were baby formula, DVDs and toothbrushes. When the officer entered the apartment, he found the suspect, her husband and their four children. The female suspect admitted to the theft and indicated that it was her son's birthday. The officer arrested the suspect—cited and released her at the scene. He then responded back to Safeway to return the items. After returning the items, officers purchased the same items along with a \$50 gift card. They returned to the suspect's apartment and gave her the items for her children. Safeway also donated cupcakes for the birthday.

CITY OF GRESHAM

You want to know why I've only had a handful of legitimately bad days in this job? I'll tell you: it's because of the people I just mentioned, and the thousands of times every year Gresham employees go above and beyond to make the lives of our citizens better.

There are many, many examples of our employees personally investing in the everyday lives of Gresham residents, but I want to tell you about one recent example that impacted nearly everyone in Gresham who drives a car.

What do you do when six inches of rainfall in a 72-hour period causes debris flows so substantial that they block a 112-inch culvert and wash out a major arterial roadway above it, instantly taking down the preferred route for 35,000 vehicle trips a day? Well, if you are the City of Gresham, the answer is work for a month straight, nights and weekends, through Christmas, New Year and a snowstorm, and spare no effort until it is back open again.

Here is a short video describing the effort it took to reopen the road.

[Video]

As you saw in the video, this was no small undertaking. This repair required that 10,390 cubic yards of material be moved and 320 feet of corrugated metal culvert be installed. It is hard to explain in words the scale of this infrastructure project. It is a testament to fortitude that the road was reopened so quickly, and equally impressive that our City staff documented everything amazingly well throughout the project, beginning to end, in order to ensure that we are well-situated to receive a federal reimbursement.

[photos showing Kane washout rolling in background during paragraph above]

Kane is not done yet, unfortunately. We will need to go back there to construct a permanent solution at some point in the coming years, but at least we will be able to pick the timeframe instead of it picking us, and we should be able to keep at least two lanes open throughout the vast majority of the project.

While I'm on the topic of Kane Road, let me point out one more group of people who impressed me tremendously during that nightmare...you. Gresham residents, you showed a level of interest, patience, understanding and civility in discourse that, well, quite frankly, was refreshing in an environment where it seems like bombastic, mean-spirited, irrational rhetoric has taken over our national discourse. Gresham residents never cease to amaze me by demonstrating exactly what it means to belong in a society and cooperate with each other. Don't worry, they also aren't bashful to let me know EXACTLY what is on their minds at Any. Given. Moment. [Image of Bess Wills displays on the screen]. Try local first!

Kane Road is but one example of the type of ingenuity, innovation and expediency our work, in all service areas, will require in the years to come. We know we cannot do business the way it

CITY OF GRESHAM

has always been done, just as you know that businesses in your arena, if they don't change and innovate, are not long for the world.

When it comes to examples of the opportunities we have in this arena, there is some particularly exciting work being done in our Fire and Emergency Services Department. We now have a pilot project in the works to deploy a Quick Response Vehicle—or QRV—to respond to a host of non-life-threatening medical calls, which would have previously required the full deployment of a fire engine and crew.

If the QRVs can take some of the peak-hour pressure off of our medical calls, we can realize two critical outcomes: one, cost savings for our taxpayers, and two, better service for our residents. I want to pause for a moment and recognize that Chief Greg Matthews, one of Gresham's very own, was a key leader in getting this long-desired service up and running. Chief Matthews has worked at every level of the Gresham Fire Department, which made him a tremendous asset in designing this pilot program and deploying it effectively. Thank you, Chief Matthews. Along with Greg, we had some exceptional help from our City Management, and, notably, from our firefighter/EMS employees represented through their union. Change can be scary, no doubt, and these men and women were willing to work with us to get to the right solution.

In addition to the QRV, we have a very exciting partnership with OHSU nursing students through the Gresham CARES program. These students reach out to citizens following contact with Gresham Fire and Emergency Services and they determine if additional services from local area programs are needed. When these students are successful in this work, it results in both healthier residents and fewer calls for expensive emergency services.

These are just two examples of the types of reform measures our enterprise will need to pursue vigorously in the years to come. We will change, we'll innovate, we'll adjust and evaluate as we go, but we will not stop in our pursuit of optimal services, optimally delivered.

You know, I got a little grief for delivering my speech in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce today. I shouldn't say I got grief....I didn't get grief, I got an opportunity to give it a second time at City Hall this evening.

I think there is an unfortunate misperception that this is a room full of multi-millionaires, which I'm sure will come as a surprise to many of you. My experience has always been that the Chamber is full of hard-working men and women who are desperately trying to start and grow their enterprises with modest means and little else besides each other to rely upon.

My experience is also that this has always been a group of folks willing to step up, just like our other community leaders, faith leaders, non-profit leaders and neighborhood leaders, to serve our city, volunteer time and donate funds, and absolutely, unabashedly promote our community whenever possible, and extol the virtues of what we have going here.

CITY OF GRESHAM

And, we have plenty going for us. What Gresham has lacked in public resources and stable funding, it has always more than made up for in character, comradery, a sense of place and purpose, a willingness to help one another. More than anything, I'm betting on that right now. Those community themes, and that ethic of stewardship and service, reverberates throughout the City of Gresham and throughout the City's workforce.

As I begin to wrap this up, I want to tell you a story. Four days before Christmas this past December, off-duty Gresham Detective Dan Marciano was with his wife at a shopping center in Clackamas. They noticed some commotion while walking through the parking lot, so Dan went over to check things out (that's what detectives do, you know, check things out.).

As he arrived at the incident, Detective Marciano encountered a 67-year-old man in full cardiac arrest. Without a second thought, Dan dropped to the ground and began CPR. What you are about to watch on the screen behind me is the video from Dan's wife's phone.

[Video playing in the background]

Detective Marciano was able to continue CPR until paramedics arrived and transported the patient to the hospital. The male subject survived thanks to the lifesaving efforts of Detective Dan Marciano, and lived to have another Christmas, more hugs with his family—the continuation of life itself.

Dan is here with us today, and I want to recognize him for what he did, and for being the person he is. Dan, please stand for a moment.

This whole thing is all about helping each other when we need it the most. In a single word, it is my estimation that the state of the city is “poised.” We are *self-reflective* enough to honestly assess our gaps and needs and yet we're *self-reliant* enough to put in the work and continue to invest with optimism. We gladly answer our call to honor the responsibility of inheriting this great place and happily serve our shift as the stewards of this incredible community.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today, and for all that you all do in our community. It is the honor of a lifetime to serve as your Mayor, but I couldn't do it, I would never do it, without people like you stepping up alongside us and serving one another. That collective willingness to serve and sacrifice, in a nutshell, is the state of our city. Thank you very much.