

2019 State of the City – Reno, Nevada

Introduction by Chris Payne

Hey guys ... welcome to the 2019 State of the City Address!

My name is Chris Payne. I've had a very, very lucky career in radio for 28 years between The Biggest Little City and the capitol city over the hill in Sacramento, California. And now you can hear me at Greater Nevada Field, emceeding Reno Aces games as well as being the voice of Reno 1868 FC.

President of Operations at Greater Nevada Field, Eric Edelstein, just shot me a message over here. He wanted me to remind you that there is a friendly this Saturday afternoon at Greater Nevada Field against the San Jose Earthquakes and then on Saturday, March 9, Reno 1868 gets the season underway. And then on Tuesday, April 9, Reno Aces take the field at Greater Nevada Field as well. So, come on guys, let's get loud for your local teams!

This is an incredible engagement this evening. We're very happy to be here, and it's great to see so many friends and families alike enjoying everything athletic and sports in the Truckee Meadows. Also, we want to say thanks to everybody for being such great sports and braving the element – little chilly out there, a little brisk. Maybe slippery in spots, but you know what, we all made it safe and we're here to have a great time.

So tonight we have a recap and a look ahead at what's in store for the City of Reno in 2019. We want this to be an absolute blast for you. So we want to make sure you guys get loud – clap, cheer, do the wave if you want – whatever! We want you be engaged, get involved. Let's all do this together tonight, come on you guys, let's go!

No better time than right now to get this party started. Let's please welcome the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority President and CEO Phil W.B. DeLone!

Welcome by RSCVA President and CEO Phil DeLone

Good evening everyone, and welcome to Reno's State of the City Address. So nice to have you all here at our Convention Center.

Tonight, we celebrate northern Nevada's long, vibrant history with sports, athletics and the sporting lifestyle.

Since Nevada achieved statehood in 1864, Reno-Tahoe and the region has been synonymous with athletics and sports.

As early as 1897 for you history buffs, the famous heavyweight boxing championship held here between Bob Fitzsimmons and "Gentleman" Jim Corbett resulted in putting

northern Nevada on the national landscape.

Having been selected in 1956 by the International Olympic Committee, our region hosted the eighth Olympic Winter Games in 1960 at nearby Squaw Valley – just a few miles from where we all sit here tonight.

Why was this important? This created – for millions of viewers – millions, a global awareness of Reno-Tahoe when, for the very first time, the Winter Games aired on CBS television.

Today, the sporting life is ingrained in the culture of northern Nevada and offers residents like us – and the many professional athletes who live here too – arguably the finest outdoor recreation found anywhere in North America.

Professional athletes such as cycling's Cameron Zink and two-time Olympic gold medalist skier David Wise call Reno home, as do a number of others.

But both of these men, and other local athletes, have helped the RSCVA secure future national sporting events for Reno-Tahoe.

Sports and athletics is big business here today.

Just take volleyball. As an example, volleyball can bring us as many as 40,000 room nights per year. This represents annually as much as \$20 million dollars in local economic impact for our community.

Since its inception in 1995, the city's National Bowling Stadium has produced nearly 2 million room nights and over \$1.5 billion in economic impact.

The sport of bowling is a tremendous tourism resource to our destination. With us tonight, are two very special guests, United States Bowling Congress Executive Director Chad Murphy and Greg Moore, senior director of tournament programming. Gentlemen, please stand and be recognized. Thanks to you and the fine board of directors at USBC for all you have done for our community.

Let's look at the Livestock Events Center. You may not know this, but it was established in 1886 by a State of Nevada land grant, your equestrian center this year celebrates its 133 year birthday. In June, the Reno Rodeo will enjoy its 100th anniversary. That event was just started after World War I in 1919. Overall, equestrian sporting events bring over \$10-20 million dollars in economic impact in a typical year.

The United States Olympic Committee considers this region of Reno-Tahoe a key destination in hosting its domestic and international tournaments. From taekwondo to fencing – from boxing to track and field – and every sport in between – all compete here in Reno-Tahoe.

Combined, the business of sports can easily bring us 135,000 to 140,000 room nights to town annually, representing well over \$90 million dollars in economic impact every year.

Sports is a great economic driver for tourism in northern Nevada. No doubt about it.

Add to all of these numbers the business tied to baseball's Reno Aces, there here this evening. Football club 1868, they were out front, and University of Nevada athletics, go Wolfpack. And you easily grasp how important, and how valuable, the sports market is to our community here.

Thank you again for attending tonight.

It's now my distinct pleasure to welcome Reno City Manager Sabra Newby:

Message from Reno City Manager Sabra Newby

Thanks Phil. Good evening, and welcome! I'm Reno City Manager Sabra Newby, and I'd like to thank you all for being here.

Tonight's theme is Changing the Game, and we're certainly seeing transformations in The Biggest Little City!

Just last year, Reno was ranked the 6th Best Small City in the country, thanks to our year-round recreation and emerging tech industry.

By welcoming businesses like Apple, Tesla and Google, creating dynamic collaborative efforts like the Downtown Reno Partnership, and working with residents on neighborhood improvement projects, we are all changing the game, and the future of Reno.

Tonight is an illustration of a number of successful partnerships, and I'd like to take a moment to thank those partners. Thank you to RSCVA and SMG for hosting tonight's event. Thank you to all of the participants in tonight's Community Engagement Fair and Sports Expo, and everyone who worked so hard organizing tonight's event.

And my sincere thanks to you, the residents, volunteers, business owners, community leaders and city employees who continue to change the game in our city every day.

Now, I'd like to hand it back to tonight's emcee, Chris Payne, as we welcome our 2019 Reno City Council.

Chris Payne

Thank you very much, Sabra. Fans, friends, family and everybody else in attendance tonight: It's time that we get loud in here. You guys ready to get loud with me? Are you ready to get loud tonight? It's time tonight – let's get to it. How about the starting lineups for your 2019 Reno City Council:

[Introduction of Reno City Council]

Well wait my friends, we're not done yet. We happen to have the general manager of the State of Nevada right here inside of the Reno-Sparks Convention Center. Please welcome the Governor of Nevada, Steve Sisolak:

Governor Sisolak

Good evening, Reno!

I thought I was following Michael Buffer, the way he was announcing your City Council here.

I had an opportunity to stay home and watch the State of the Union or come here and watch Hillary and the City Council and the State of the City and it was a slam dunk choice, let me tell you something.

It was interesting – Sabra, who was a really great friend of mine and used to work with me in Clark County, mentioned that you were the 6th best small city in the country home to the 6th best basketball team in the country: Wolf Pack!

I am excited to be here and celebrate the successes of the City of Reno, and it's a real honor that you've invited me and the City Council has welcomed me.

When I was elected, I pledged to be a governor for all of Nevada. To let those who haven't shared in the successes that we've achieved in Nevada to have a place at the table so that everybody sitting at every dinner table can join in the success that we've achieved. Every school child regardless of what school that they go to; every senior citizen. We will do our part to make sure that Reno's families continue on their road to prosperity, and I am committed to be a good partner with the City of Reno and your incredible City Council.

Serving as your governor is the honor of my lifetime. We were charged with several priorities when we came up here being education, healthcare and jobs. We are committed to continuing that, and it is such an incredible opportunity to be partners with the city and with this incredible City Council that you've got here before me and the mayor.

And with that, I want to say thank you very much for inviting me, but you've got a great team here, but this quarterback you've got right behind me, Hillary Schieve. I'll tell you

what, I've met a lot of mayors and none of them measure up to this young woman right here – nobody does.

What Hillary has done and the City Council has done to continue the successes that you've achieved in Reno are exemplary, and I can tell you other cities around the state and around the country are following your footsteps.

So with that, thank you for having me, I look forward to the festivities tonight. God Bless you all and have a great evening. Thank you all.

[Mayor Schieve asks to hold a moment of silence for citizens who we lost this year.]

[Presentation of Colors & National Anthem by Shanti Shanti.]

Chris Payne

Thank you to the City of Reno Honor Guard and Shanti Shanti.

It's my honor to introduce to you our first guest this evening, Jenny Brekhus, who was elected into the Reno City Council in 2012 and represents Ward 1 for the City of Reno.

Ward 1 encompasses West and Old Southwest, Caughlin Ranch, portions of Midtown and Downtown, the Skyline area, Dickerson Rd. and the area within the northwest mainloop.

In her role as liason to the Financial Advisory Board, she is focused on the city's fiscal affairs. With a background in city planning, she brings expertise on the build environment to the city council. She championed the creation of the 2017 master plan.

Councilmember Brekhus is also focused on all aspects of growth and development and the infrastructure necessary to support a high quality of life in our neighborhoods both existing and future.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Councilmember Jenny Brekhus:

Ward 1 Reno City Councilmember Jenny Brekhus

Greetings everyone. While we're still in the first week of February, let me wish all of you the best as this new year unfolds.

A thank you is also in order to our staff who put together this event and to you, the audience for coming out tonight and demonstrating your interest in our city's affairs.

In 1945, Walter Van Tilburg Clark published his book, *The City of Trembling Leaves*. In

it, he describes early 20th century Reno as a bustling small town on the edge of a mountain range, with fantastic scenery all around.

This theme resonated in 2017 when we prepared our new city master plan to guide our future for the next 20 years. In preparing the vision for what we wanted our community to become, we heard resoundingly that Reno is a base for outdoor recreation.

No public service is more essential for this enjoyment than a parks and open space system. I've had the pleasure over the past 6 years of being the City Council liaison to the Parks and Recreation Commission, and in those years there have been challenges to advancing our goals.

Our park system is a 115-year legacy that we've inherited, but the city's fiscal condition in the aftermath of the Great Recession has us stretched in maintaining the system and in expanding it for a growing population.

With public safety personnel in both the Police and Fire Departments at levels less than a decade ago, it has been difficult for this Council to eke out resources for the park system.

There is a lot to be excited about in Reno these days as our economy diversifies and expands, but that does not translate to the city's fiscal condition.

There is little that this Council can do to improve our situation because it's the result of state policy. But we must explore the most efficient utilization of regional revenues, leaving no sacred cows off the table.

Today we are calling attention to sports in our community and to individual contributors. I would like to recognize Reno Fly Shop owner Jim Litchfield for his dedication to one of Reno's best recreational offerings, the Truckee River.

While I have not painted a rosy picture of city finances, the positive outlook for our community resides in the passion that Reno residents both long time and new arrivals, have for our community.

Jim Litchfield exemplifies this passion. Like many, he arrived in Reno from Las Vegas as a UNR undergraduate. Trained as a hydrologist, Jim's earliest career was in the management of surface waters, but this technical background soon evolved into a focus on the recreational benefits of water.

Jim was an architect of the downtown Truckee River park and founder of the Reno River Festival.

In a bold entrepreneurial leap during the dark days of the great recession, Jim opened the Reno Fly Shop in a boarded up business building just up from Wingfield Park. Now, today, that business is surrounded by other thriving small businesses.

Jim's faith that Reno would rebound is inspirational to me. In today's transforming cities, small independent commercial businesses like his are critical to urban renaissance, and appreciation is owed to individuals like Jim who take personal investment risks.

Please join me in recognizing Jim Litchfield and the Reno Fly Shop.

While we are calling attention to stand out individuals today, I believe the measurement of how we are doing as a city is not how many high performance athletes we produce or even the number of outdoor recreational businesses that we support.

We must strive to provide the opportunity for every citizen to build recreational opportunities into their daily lives. This involves safe walkable neighborhoods, a robust park system and access to open space and to recreational programming. Simply put, people need this for their mental and physical wellbeing.

Our Reno master plan has a template for us to grow responsibly so that we can achieve this, while accommodating new growth with the housing units that are most affordable to our projected population.

It will not be easy to accomplish all of this given our fiscal condition. Sometimes decisions among sub-optimal alternatives must be made.

I am hopeful that the Mayor, my Council colleagues and City Manager Newby can do well in this upcoming year. I ask you to keep us in your thoughts as we address the issues of the day.

Thank you very much.

Chris Payne

Thank you Councilmember Jenny Brekhus.

Ladies and gentlemen, when posting about tonight's event on social media, please feel free to use the hashtag #SOTCReno. That way we can all be engaged in the same conversation.

Naomi Duerr is our next guest. She was recently re-elected to serve a second term on the Reno City Council for Ward 2. She is also your Vice Mayor for 2019.

Ward 2 is a vast part of our city from Moana Nursery to Virginia Lake to Damonte Ranch.

Vice Mayor Duerr first came to Reno when she was 19 to visit her father who had moved here after a brief visit. Like him and many visitors to the Biggest Little City, she

fell in love with the area and calls it home.

In her first term as city councilmember, Naomi used her experience as a successful business owner and dedicated public servant along with her “get things done” attitude to build on the strengths of our community. She promotes smart growth and careful management of our precious natural resources.

Vice Mayor Duerr currently serves as the chair of Washoe County Debt Management Commission and the Animal Advisory Board, and is liason to the Reno Arts & Culture Commission, Artown, and Urban Forestry.

She also serves on the Truckee River Flood Management Authority and much more.

In her free time, Naomi loves spending her time with her husband Herb and her two dogs, Macy and Daisy. She is also quite the amateur photographer. Ladies and gentlemen, let’s hear it for Vice Mayor Naomi Duerr:

Ward 2 Reno City Councilmember and Vice Mayor Naomi Duerr

Well welcome again tonight. It is fantastic to see this room full.

I am going to be talking a little bit about cycling in our community. Cycling for fun, transportation and sport is becoming big in Reno.

My own love of bikes, and the freedom they bring, began at a very young age.

I was, you may not believe it, a tom boy. I played all kinds of sports, like baseball and football, and I climbed trees and I built tree forts with my three brothers.

When I was 9 years old, I started my very first business: teaching kids to ride their bikes. While my brothers and I were riding from an early age, many kids seemed to be lagging.

Owning my own business, starting me off as a serial entrepreneur taught me patience, kindness, tolerance and increased my love of biking. All of which are Reno attributes.

I’m so thankful to be able to serve a second term as a councilwoman and Vice Mayor for 2019.

My husband and I are geologists and when I’m not serving as a Councilwoman, you can find me out in the field with him running our small business, exploring for minerals in Nevada and nearby states.

As a scientist, I advocate for the STEAM curriculum. STEAM, for those who don’t know,

stands for science, technology, engineering, arts and math: all are essential skills for kids growing up in today's world. I also advocate for adults to better understand science and the effects of what we do on our local environment.

Reno is one of the fastest-warming places in America. That's why we began ReLEAF Reno, a new program to double the number of trees in Reno. These trees will provide cleaner air and cooling shade in our quickly warming city, and a host of other benefits for generations to come. We encourage everyone to get out there and plant a tree.

Just last year, the City of Reno teamed with the Reno Centennial Sunset Rotary Club, the LDS Stakes and other service groups to plant over 100 larger trees. You may have seen the booth for Urban Forestry outside. Let's hear it all for our volunteers!

Ward 2 is a very diverse and dynamic part of the city. It's a haven for retirees, for young families, and many who love to bike.

Just this year, your Reno City Council renewed the pilot franchise with Lime Bike, which is now known as just Lime, extending service for an additional year. How many of you have taken a spin on one of those neon green bikes that you've seen across town? I have. If not, you need to try one. I'm proud that we've become the type of progressive city where you can jump on a bike and enjoy some of our best attractions.

So on a sunny morning, in Ward 2, I'd recommend you head over to Virginia Lake and enjoy the now clean water, a newly refurbished walking path that goes all around the lake, check out the beautiful Dragonfly sculpture created by artist Peter Hazel as well.

You can continue biking to Huffaker Park, which was the site of their first neighborhood cleanup in over 30 years this last year. And then to the ever-expanding south Reno, where you will certainly spot a wild horse or two. The city has taken important steps to protect residents and horses as well with reduced road speeds and increased fencing. I even put up some of that fencing.

To make biking safer, we are even working on a bikeway called a two-way cycle tron or cycle way on Center Street from Midtown to the University. It's going to take some getting used to--going two ways on a one-way street.

While you are in south Reno, I encourage you to check out the amazing bike lane along the Southeast Connector. Last September, I was honored to help dedicate this bikeway to the legacy of an inspiring young woman and cyclist: Erica Greif.

Erica, a UNR grad and a Reno-based competitive cyclist, was tragically killed in a car crash in 2015 on her way to a cycling competition. Her legacy lives on through our town and through her family, including her younger brother, David, who said of Erica: "She made me set my goals really high. There is no limit. She just proved that to me over and over again."

With us tonight are Erica's mom, Trish; her grandmother, Ellen; and Richard Paul, organizer of the Reno Wheelman Cycling and local bike shop owner. I would ask them to please stand over here. Please join me in recognizing the life of Erica. Here we have Trish. Thank you so much.

Any recognition of cycling would be incomplete if I did not also recognize the Reno Kiwanis and their owners and their coordinators for the last 20 years Roger and Ellen Jacobson. Roger and Ellen will you please stand. They have provided bikes, taught biking to kids throughout our community and if you've ever been out there in Burning Man time, they provide what it seems like 50,000 out of the 70,000 bikes out on the playa.

As I look forward to the coming year, I am invigorated and reminded to focus on the things that are important to both you and our community: public safety, including street safety, sustainability, arts and culture and, of course, affordable housing.

Charles Schultz, the creator of the Peanuts comic strip, once said, "Life is like a 10-speed bicycle. Most of us have gears we never use."

I challenge you to think about the gears you are not using right now. Is there something more you can be doing to help our community? Perhaps feeding the homeless. Your neighborhood? Perhaps working on planting trees. A park?

I ask you to join me, the rest of our Council, our staff, in working to help Reno become an even better place to live, work and play. Together, we can get great things done for our community.

Thank you so much for being here tonight.

Chris Payne

Keep the noise going please for Vice Mayor Naomi Deurr.

Our next guest this evening is a native Nevadan, Oscar Delgado. He was elected to office to represent Ward 3 in 2012.

Ward 3 extends over Northeast, Center and Southeast Reno. This ward includes neighborhoods east of the University of Nevada, Reno, Wells Avenue, Miraloma and stretches south to parts of Damonte Ranch.

As a member of the Reno City Council, Oscar brings his broad base of work experience and education. His knowledge within the construction industry, healthcare arena, understanding of economic and community development and practice within the social service and community outreach sectors contribute to the overall effectiveness of the city.

Councilmember Delgado is passionate about finding solutions to our city and region by working directly and creatively with our neighborhoods, nonprofit organizations, educators, businesses and our youth.

Oscar sits on the Regional Transportation Commission, the District Board of Health, the Community Homelessness Advisory Board and more.

When Oscar isn't working hard for the Biggest Little City, he enjoys cooking with his wife Sarita who is also here tonight, playing with his twins Samiya and Dario, spending time with his family and friends, volunteering for a non-profit, and exploring the beautiful landscapes of Northern Nevada.

Ladies and gentlemen, please give a hometown welcome to Councilmember Oscar Delgado:

Ward 3 Reno City Councilmember Oscar Delgado

Good evening everybody, thanks for being out here tonight. So great to see so many family, friends and community members. It means so much to me to know that you guys have such a stake and interest in the community.

Colin Powell once said, "A dream does not become reality through magic, it takes sweat, determination and hard work."

If there's someone in our community who understands the sacrifice required in achieving a dream, it's Ricardo Lucio. Ricardo was raised in Ward 3. He attended Libby Booth, Vaughn and Wooster and is a shining star as a professional boxer.

Ricardo is also a Nevada business student, here at UNR, and an aspiring future business owner. His goal is to open a gym to help mentor younger generations, as he was once mentored. Most importantly, he is challenging norms, raising awareness, and giving a face to dreamers. Ricardo is a DACA recipient.

While he may box in the ring, he is also fighting to show that dreamers play an important part in our country, especially here in our community. As he stated, "I dream and hope that my character, and my work ethic, will speak for itself. Not my circumstances. I am a Nevadan and I will make Nevada proud."

Thank you, Ricardo, for being here today.

Just like Ricardo who would like to one day give back, we are fortunate to have invaluable community partners, always willing to step up in times of need.

Last year, after the unspeakable vandalism that occurred, Traner Pool reopened to an

enthusiastic crowd! I am incredibly, incredibly thankful to all the community partners who generously donated more than \$875,000 to make sure that Traner Pool reopened as quickly as possible. Thank you to all of those donors.

Creating healthy communities across our city is one of my top priorities in the coming years. I will look to regional partners to integrate public health into public policy, ensuring our decisions are not based on emotion, but are data and community driven.

I am proud of the work that continues to be done through the Neighborhood Renewal Program, which to date the City of Reno has been able to assist eight low and moderate income homeowners clean and repair their properties.

In addition to supporting our neighborhood pride, this program also plays a critical role in keeping some of our most vulnerable citizens with a roof over their head.

Last year we also joined together to open the new Early Learning Center at Reno's homeless shelter, which provides free childcare services in a safe, learning environment. Thanks to those partners. It means so much to those families.

In creating healthy communities, it is vital that we care for our most vulnerable. And one way to do that is to make sure that our businesses and development communities are thriving.

They bring quality jobs and are critical partners in charitable giving.

In this last year, we have looked to eliminate inefficient and duplicative regulations that were troubling to business owners. And have also moved forward in amending outdated regulations to speed up development projects.

I support innovative transportation models, pedestrian safety and increasing walkability in all corners of Reno. These issues will always be a priority for me. Because they affect our children our disabled veterans and our seniors.

Late last year, I learned about a woman named Colleen Danielson, who, at 74 years old, was living off of just \$800 a month. She received a notice that the apartment building she lived in was being sold and tenants were facing huge rental increases.

I went to Colleen's apartment, knocked on her door and sat and talked and I gave her information that she could use to find a new home. And to comfort her concerns. Colleen found that new home in November, but sadly, shortly after receiving the good news, she passed away.

But Colleen's story inspired our community.

A Reno resident heard Colleen's story and created a GoFundMe account to raise money to help other seniors in Colleen's building to afford security deposits on a new

place to live.

It's stories like these that make me so proud to call Reno home. But it also illustrates the work we still have to do. And I know we do it together.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve all of you and your families!

Chris Payne

Ladies and gentleman, Councilmember Delgado.

Don't forget about tonight's hashtag #SOTCReno.

Our next guest tonight is Bonnie Weber, who was recently elected to represent Ward 4 which encompasses North Reno, the North Valleys and Stead.

Bonnie served on the Washoe County Commission for 12 years prior to joining the Reno City Council. She works hard to make tough decisions for our neighborhoods, our city budget and our precious lands of Northern Nevada.

Her motto has always been: "Unity in community."

She works to improve transportation in our neighborhoods, create more accessible community centers for our seniors and families and was instrumental in bringing a waterpark to our kids and grandkids to the North Valleys without using taxpayer dollars.

Bonnie was appointed to serve as the liaison to the Recreation and Parks Commission, the Reno City Planning Commission, and the Regional Planning Governing Board.

Bonnie has been married to Mike, a small business owner, for more than 35 years and together they raise their family right here in the Biggest Little City.

She is a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. Matt, their 23 year old son, works hard at two full-time jobs. Their daughter and son-in-law are both graduates of the University of Nevada, Reno, and teach in the Washoe County School District as elementary teachers, and their grandchildren attend Washoe County schools.

Ladies and gentlemen, let's give a huge welcome to your newest councilmember, Bonnie Weber:

Ward 4 Reno City Councilmember Bonnie Weber

Hello Reno!

As your newest Reno City Council Member, I am really excited to be joining this high flying team!

My husband and I have been residents of the North Valleys for over 36 years, and as your Ward 4 representative, I look forward to lifting Reno up and to continue building innovative and responsible growth.

For years, Ward 4 has been in desperate need of new amenities, and I have heard from many families about their desire to enjoy new restaurants, a retail center, family activities a movie theater and athletic fields that are updated and regularly maintained.

I hope to announce in the near future, a new civic center, as well as a senior center, in the heart of the North Valleys.

Ward 4 residents deserve to have a sense of one community. Individual neighborhoods coming together! Over the next four years, I pledge to help bring Ward 4 the latest and greatest amenities that can be used by all!

Every neighborhood in Ward 4 is unique and offers something special.

Take Stead for example. Did you know that the Stead community got its name from Cronston K. Stead, a World War II pilot, who crashed and was killed at the age of 27. The Reno Army Airport, built in 1942, was renamed to the Stead Army Air Base in his honor and later renamed the Reno-Stead Airport in 1966.

And who can forget that Ward 4's Reno-Stead Airport is home to the National Championship Air Races? The National Championship Air Races is the world's fastest motor sport. Who in the audience has been to the Air Races? Aren't they great? It is one of my favorite times of year!

Did you know, in the past 10 years, the Reno Air Races has drawn more than 1 million spectators to the event? And it has generated over \$600 million for our region!

Those are amazing things coming from Ward 4!

And more than 2,500 volunteers give their time each year to help make the event take off and run smoothly!

Volunteering is so important to well-being. This year, my hope is for the City of Reno to partner with private entities and have a great lead-up to the 2019 Air Races! We'll host neighborhood cleanups in the Stead area and ensure a clean and welcoming environment for all of our visitors!

This evening we are joined by the Reno Air Racing Association's Chairman of the Board Fred Telling and CFO Tony Logoteta. Thank you for being here.

In previous years I have hosted a coffee and conversation at the Sierra Sage Golf Course in the North Valleys. Just last month the City of Reno helped me launch the

kick-off event and it was a great success!

Citizen engagement, as well as that of the neighborhoods, is a top priority for me. These coffee and conversation socials are held once a month inviting folks to grab a cup of coffee, a donut and ask questions in casual setting! I enjoy meeting residents from every neighborhood and I will continue to host these socials and encourage ward four residents to attend!

And speaking of community engagement, we can not forget the Sierra Nevada Job Corps Center right there in Ward 4. We've been partners for many years, and I look forward to working together to create a stronger community.

When we work together, we all succeed. That is why I look forward to partnering with Washoe County and the private sector in order to solve some of the most complex issues that Ward 4 currently faces.

It is time for us to bring amazing things to an already great community! With your help I have no doubt that neighborhoods will blossom, parks will be filled with the laughter of children, and residents will feel a sense of pride of community.

Amelia Earhart said, "The most effective way to do it...is to do it."

I look forward to serving this great City of Reno!

Chris Payne

Keep the noise coming ladies and gentlemen for your newest councilmember, Bonnie Weber.

Our next guest this evening, voters first elected Councilmember Neoma Jardon to the Reno City Council in 2012.

She represents Ward 5 which includes the Old Northwest, University of Nevada, Somersett and Verdi neighborhoods as well as parts of Downtown Reno.

Neoma is putting her more than 20 years of business management experience to work to help improve Reno's economy by making Reno the most business friendly city in the west.

She said, "Attracting new business to the region while at the same time recognizing and promoting existing businesses is incredibly important to me."

Neoma served as Vice Mayor from 2017 through 2018. She sits on the Regional Transportation Commission Board, Truckee Meadows Water Authority, the Senior Citizen Advisory Board, and serves as a liaison to the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee, Special Events Sub-Committee, and the Community Homeless Advisory

Board.

When Neoma's not working to improve the lives of all of our community members including our most vulnerable, she spends her time with her husband, her two kids and her adorable pup named Duke, all while continuing to kick cancer to the curb.

Ladies and gentlemen, please stay loud for Councilmember Neoma Jardon:

Ward 5 Reno City Councilmember Neoma Jardon

Thank you, thank you, thank you--that was so kind.

I think we need a 7th inning stretch. What does everybody think?

How about we do this. I'm going off script--Brad don't kill me. Everybody stand up, do a quick stretch, reach to the person next to you, introduce yourself.

That's what you call reading the crowd, knowing the crowd needed to stretch.

Thank you everybody for being here tonight, it really is an honor and what a tremendous crowd. It's so exciting to see a packed house here to hear about all of the exciting things we have going on.

Tonight we have celebrated so many great Reno people and Reno moments.

Now it's my honor to share two of my proudest accomplishments as a Reno city council member: Reno Works and the new Downtown Reno Partnership.

First: Reno Works.

Reno Works is a creative/caring partnership program between the City of Reno and Volunteers of America. For 12 weeks homeless shelter clients work to clean up our parks, to clean along the river to remove graffiti and all while they learn financial management, the importance of teamwork, life skills, and most importantly they learn that their city believes in them and we are there to help them on their path to self reliance and sustainability.

I remember discussing the idea of this work program with Pat Cashell in 2015 and the need to do something more, something different. Skip ahead four years, and we've had 65 individuals from 10 classes graduate from the program. Those 65 individuals have moved out of the shelter, into employment and into supportive housing.

Just yesterday, our 11th Reno Works class began, with another group of determined individuals eager to turn their lives around.

It is also my privilege and honor tonight to announce that Reno works has earned

national recognition by receiving the dollar wise innovation grant for 10 thousand dollars from the US Conference of Mayors!

Secondly, I wanted to highlight the Business Improvement District also known as the Downtown Reno Partnership and their 13 wonderful ambassadors that work for it.

In the past few months, our downtown ambassadors have worked with code enforcement and Public Works to:

- Remove 394 graffiti tags,
- Retrieve more than 200 grocery carts,
- and provided direction to more than one thousand visitors to our downtown.

A large role of an ambassador is to interface with some of our most vulnerable community members, and to build relationships and trust to help connect those individuals with services and shelter. In late December, two brave ambassadors saved a man's life when they found him suffering a medical emergency on the riverfront steps of city plaza.

What an incredible story!

So if we all could give it up for our downtown ambassadors, their executive director Alex Stettinski, our leader Cindy Carano and everyone involved with the Business Improvement District!

One of the great things about being a Reno city council member is all the wonderful people you meet along the way and getting to know them and their inspirational stories.

For me, one of those people is Nan Barta. Nan left an abusive relationship and found herself homeless, living in a tent, struggling with an alcohol addiction and wandering the streets of Reno. Through compassion and caring, Nan entered the women's shelter and was introduced to the many programs there.

Nan showed up at the shelter with little hope. However, she was encouraged by VOA staff to submit an application for Reno Works.

Nan took a chance on Reno Works, and her persistence paid off. But completing the program was just the beginning of the new life she had always wanted.

With dedication and perseverance Nan found the strength and the worth in herself to apply for a job with the Downtown Reno Partnership. Nan is now one of our ambassadors.

Nan, like the other ambassadors are creating a cleaner, safer, friendlier environment for downtown residents and visitors.

I'm proud to say that Nan is here with us tonight, she has been sober for over a year. She is known to her colleagues and friends for her infectious smile and her dogged determination.

Let's give a huge round of applause to Nan, all of our ambassadors and all of our Reno Works graduates.

I love Nan's story because it illustrates the positive impact of believing in people and believing that everyone deserves a second chance, and that together we can change our community and change lives. I'm very proud of these programs and you all should be too.

Speaking of downtown, it was a huge honor to partner with the Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation to open the Biggest Little Dog Park last summer. Thank you to Sherron Elledge, the many fantastic donors, community partners and local businesses that have helped make this project a reality for our four-legged family members.

But we're also here tonight to honor our incredible local athletes. At the top of that list for me is Shay Hampton.

Shay, a veteran who had to learn to walk and talk again after suffering a brain injury in Iraq, made us all proud when he earned a gold and silver medal in the most recent Invictus Games held in Australia.

Shay has been a loyal participant in our parks and recreation therapeutic program.

I'd also like to take a moment to recognize the High Fives wheelchair rugby team, the first City of Reno Paralympic Sports program!

Please join me in honoring Shay, the High Fives wheelchair rugby team, and those who have given new hope to our injured veterans through sports and recreation!

There are many amazing things happening in our great city, but there's much work still to do. And the Reno of today didn't happen overnight. It took more than 150 years!

Our city's history is rich. And as we continue to write the next chapter of the Reno Renaissance, let's take a look back at some of the most iconic moments in Reno's sports history.

In this amazing video, generously produced by Nevada Sports Net, we will see just how many wins Reno has had along the way. Thank you and I hope you enjoy the look back:

[Nevada Sports Net video plays.]

Chris Payne

What an incredible video tonight, thank you to our friends at Nevada Sports Network.

I want to see if we can do three quick chants before we move on with the rest of the night.

I say wolf, you say pack.

I say vamos, you say azules.

And the last one: Let's go Aces.

Well done. Well done, you guys. We want to recognize some other MVPs here in the building this evening. From our fellow governments like Sparks and Washoe County. If you work with one of our fellow neighbors and are able, please stand so we can recognize you this evening.

And now without any further ado, ladies and gentlemen, we have tonight's main event here to share her game plan for 2019 and beyond, please welcome to the stage Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve:

Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve:

How's everyone doing? Alright, so are you impressed? Before we get the show on the road we're not in overtime yet. So I'm going to let everyone get out of here pretty quickly.

[Recognition of Leila Hawkins, local youth soccer player.]

Well welcome everyone.

In the past few years, we've focused on powerful themes with our State of the City Address, from air service, education, tourism to the arts.

As I look back at our last year, and look ahead to 2019, I say we should keep racking up the Ws.

One of my all time favorite quotes is by Wayne Gretzky: "You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take."

That's exactly the mindset that cities must have, when it comes to tackling the challenges that they face.

So....many of you....may or may not know, certainly if you know me, I am a super-competitive mayor. I hate to lose, and I won't let us lose.

I grew up as an athlete, and that competitive spirit is with me every single day when I

tell our city's story.

But we cannot win alone. We are a team.

Sports and athletics bring communities together.

Wellness, vitality, and a shared purpose define team efforts -- from the locker room to the boardroom.

From the very beginning, Reno has been defined by its risk-takers, its innovators, its game-changers.

Home means Nevada, and I know Reno is the best city in the world.

And it's not just me saying that. It's no surprise that Reno was recently named one of America's top 10 best cities. Definitely no small win.

As you've heard from our Council, we have one of the best rosters in our city.

Just like any successful team, each one of them brings different skills, passions, and specialties. And in just a few short weeks, we'll be selecting another teammate.

So the symbolisms and parallels to sports and teamwork are everywhere in the work that we do.

2018 was a perfect example of changing the game for our city and our region.

Our reputation as a dusty gateway to the pacific is long gone!

We are now a hub and destination for all businesses. But our growing technology sector especially comes to mind. For example, Reno has become a "drone zone."

I was thrilled when the City of Reno and Flirtey were selected by the federal government to be a testing ground with the FAA by beating out some pretty hefty competition.

NASA and the National Institute of Autonomous Systems are also working with the FAA and the Reno-Tahoe Airport to discover ways to make planes and drones connect, and keep our skies safe. Making the entire nation take notice. Pretty amazing!

Now, down here on the ground, a new company called Figure is bringing in nearly 250 jobs to downtown, focusing on blockchain technology.

It's the new wave of tech exploration that will help speed up our computers, our phones, and networks, like nothing we've seen before.

Giving us a huge competitive advantage.

And when we talk about more competitive advantages downtown from our businesses, to the BID, to now bowling.

After 25 years a multi-million dollar Renovation and upgrade are taking part with a new agreement between the United States Bowling Congress and the RSCVA.

Will Chad Murphy and Greg Moore from the USBC please stand and give them a round of applause.

And speaking of multi-million dollar investments in sports...the Mighty Lizards at TMCC announced this year a \$15 million dollar investment in a new state-of-the-art sports complex and soccer facility. Wow...please give them a huge round of applause and welcome their new sports director Tina Ruff.

Our casino properties continue record-breaking room nights and multi-million dollar improvements as well. Making Reno a true destination with big announcements from impressive national restaurants, to eSports, to Topgolf. You heard me, Topgolf.

Let's give The Row, Atlantis Casino Resort, the Peppermill, GSR, Harrah's, Whitney Peak and the Sands a huge round of applause for their continued winning investment in The Biggest Little City.

These wins mean we've gone from the silver rush...to the server rush. Changing the game by advancing technology in our own city departments is critical.

That is why the Council approved \$2.4 million for two upgraded fire engines and a ladder truck. This combination of general fund money, developer contributions and grants are all what made it possible. The Reno Fire Department also responded with 155 firefighters to 54 different wildfires here at home, and in other states. All the while matching the same number of service calls as last year, more than 42,000.

Pretty remarkable!

So think about it, that is five calls per hour, every hour, for 365 days! Think about it. Amazing!

Meanwhile, the Reno Police Department succeeded in launching body worn cameras creating even more transparency.

Not to mention the two grants, from the Department of Justice, awarded in the amount of under \$2 million for reducing gun violence and opioid overdose outreach.

Our very own Police Chief, Jason Soto, established the Reno gun initiative, along with our regional partners from the FBI to Washoe County Sheriff's Department.

It's notable to mention that our violent gun associated crimes are down 16 percent this past year, with the help of those partnerships.

And every year I am proud to say this council continues to put more sworn officers and firefighters onto our streets. They truly are our heroes!

Please give these amazing men and women a huge round of applause.

Just last week, we learned that the City of Reno was ranked #1 in job growth in best-performing cities report. Get this...overall, we jumped 26 spots in the ranking, the best improvement of any city in the country.

I told you I was competitive!

Once again we are keeping our eye on the ball when it comes to city finances, receiving national accounting awards.

I am proud to report Standard & Poor's gave us another upgrade of an A+ bond rating, noting that our stability is a huge asset, due to strong financial management and good financial policies. This has resulted in some of the strongest liquidity in our city's history.

With this impressive game change it has allowed us to increase our credit rating to refinance all outstanding bonds, including our train trench bonds, at lower interest rates, giving us a huge advantage to taxpayer savings.

This doesn't happen unless you have some of the biggest MVPs watching every dollar and every dime. Thanks to Deborah Lauchner and our FAB board members. Please stand for a big round of applause.

So, when I think of game changers and MVPs who get creative and counter expectations, I think of the Reno Aces' Emily Jaenson. As the general manager of the team, Emily changed pro sports in our region. She's the highest-ranking woman in all of minor league sports. Emily, please stand up as we applaud you.

We've had a year of success attracting thriving businesses to our region. But how do we keep them here? It's through our community.

REI said that we were one of the best cities for getting outside for outdoors. National Geographic said our growing foodie scene sets us apart from anywhere else in Nevada.

That takes innovation, and that innovation must come from within.

I can find no better example in athletics than Nevada Football coach Chris Ault. Hall of Famer, conference champion and true homegrown innovator. Coach Ault created and refined something called the pistol formation. No one had ever tried this unique offensive lineup. It revolutionized Nevada athletics, going from Mackay Stadium to the

San Francisco 49ers. All because of this local innovator. Thank you, Chris!

So why do I bring up Coach Ault and innovation? Because the players, coaches and administration right here were all that he had. Our challenges of competition force our hands to get creative. Not to cut corners, or take an easy path, but to find an approach that seems unheard of. Coach Ault couldn't look to Boise State or to UNLV for help. He had to build from within.

We can't expect saviors to come from Washington DC. We must call in our own teammates right here, to forge our own success. We can't hide from our challenges. We can't deny that income inequality puts a strain on many of our neighbors.

That's why this year we launched the Human Rights Commission and were also awarded a near perfect score on the municipal index. HRC will continue making Reno a warmer and loving place for all, no matter the life they choose to live, or the person they choose to love.

Please stand, any HRC members here tonight, along with our Chair Sean Savoy. Please give them a round of applause!

Basic humanity and being good to one another can happen when people and policy meet. But when our team is down and broken, we've been fortunate to have incredible community health partners.

Most cities in the United States can only dream about a new 120-bed facility built right here this past year. I am talking about Northern Nevada Behavioral Healthcare Hospital led by Steve Shell, who has never said no to our city when it comes to mental health and addiction sufferers.

How about Northern Nevada Medical Center for their groundbreaking just this last week, of the first stand alone ER ever in our city, and their new state-of-the-art hospital on the horizon.

How about Saint Mary's regional medical center received national attention for their A+ plus rating on excellence in cleanliness and care. They too are becoming MVPs by addressing our mental health challenges by the opening of their new mental health specialty ward.

Renown is also bringing one-of-a-kind care with their incredible children's cancer infusion center. This allows those children a fighting chance to stay right here at home to receive life-saving treatment.

Community Health Alliance and HOPES rises to the top with absolute gold medal accolades, offering some of the most critical services to those who need access to health care. Their work in our community is some of the most dire and notable. Without their care, our community would not survive.

So please give huge round of applause for Chuck Duarte, Sharon Chamberlain and our health care partners that are here tonight.

This continued success in healthcare is simply not possible unless we tackle the largest challenge we face: and that is housing. We are pressured at every level of affordability and income. In many ways our region's successes certainly comes with its challenges.

A median home price of \$375,000 simply isn't an option for many people. We must continue to work hard to find ways for people to afford to live here.

Just like Coach Ault did with the tools that he had, we must innovate from within.

Just like our Village at Sage Street. This Council became innovative by forming a Community Land Trust with local nonprofit the Community Foundation. This would never have been possible without the hard work of the Community Foundation. Sage Street will bring in close to 200 truly affordable units, to offer bridge housing options.

So please give a round of applause to the Community Foundation, Jim Pfrommer, Par Tolles, Allison Gorelick and Bill Thomas, who were all key players in making this win happen.

These public and private partnerships are becoming essential to solve some of our city's biggest problems.

Some of the most challenging problems for cities all across the U.S. are lack of homeless services for our mentally ill and those suffering with substance abuse. This is an epidemic that every city is faced with and sadly many are losing the fight.

But right here at home, we have done something that will finally give those in need a fighting chance. Thanks to Washoe County and the City of Sparks, with comprehensive plans to enhance our homeless services.

This announcement of the new NNAMHS campus will truly bring something that the region has never seen before when it comes to caring for our homeless population. This is a perfect example of how governments can come together and create a true reality.

Speaking of reality, I want to address something that I am very passionate about and that's our Motel Inspection team. Four years ago I went on a ride along with RPD to fully understand some of our biggest challenges in downtown Reno. I was shocked and disgusted by what I had witnessed happening in some of our downtown motels. They were clearly taking advantage of people based on their addictions, mental health and low incomes.

Thanks to the hard work of team player Alex Woodley, this program puts boots on the ground inside units across the city.

We cannot allow sub-standard living for anyone, no matter what they pay in rent. I've seen the bed bugs, the filth, the mold, the neglect, that these so-called landlords force onto people.

Bad credit does not mean you deserve bad conditions. It's inhumane, greedy and unacceptable, especially when they tout that they provide low income housing at \$250 dollars a week. You do the math. That's \$1,000 a month for a very small, one room space, with no kitchen.

I will not waiver on this, and I will not cave to those taking advantage of our neighbors in desperate need. I hope I have made myself abundantly clear!

Now, don't get me wrong, I want to stress that not all of our motel owners are bad players. I want to especially thank those who provide safety, affordability and cleanliness to those living in some of our motels for long term housing.

Since tonight's theme is changing the game. One of the most impressive city accomplishments that I truly do believe is that we oversaw the creation of more than 1,600 affordable housing units.

It's a combination of city funds, federal grants and developers coming to the table.

And in 2018, we had the highest number of residential permits issued in more than a decade, jumping 21 percent in the last three years alone!

So why is this game changing? Because this will help stabilize market instability for many families and individuals.

The city and our partners have been implementing a winning strategy to address these needs.

It deserves much more attention than just tonight.

That is why I'm announcing that we will be holding a state of housing address scheduled this spring.

We will bring together our community to listen to what we've done, to share where we're going and to hear from our experts.

I encourage all of you to join us for this important conversation. Be part of our team.

So tonight, as we reflect and look forward, I want you to think of the gamechangers and innovators in your life that challenge you!

Because if it doesn't challenge you, it won't change you!

Become your own risk taker. I never want us to look back and say...woulda, coulda, shoulda for our city and nor should you.

Think of the sheer audacity of what the Jack Johnson-Jim Jeffries fight meant, and the risks involved.

The Fight of the Century was 15 rounds of charisma and emotion when our city was emerging from the old west frontier and onto the national stage.

Those two heavyweights showed that athletic competition, like in our society, shouldn't be defined by the color of the skin inside their gloves. And it took something like that fight to begin to break down barriers more than a century ago.

Reno should be known for it's skill, and passion of its people. The smiles and new connections we see at food trucks along the river. The new artwork inspiring us in public spaces across the city.

The high fives we give to fellow fans at Lawlor Events Center after a Martin brothers' slam dunk.

And how about Coach Muss's team? And the hard work of Doug Knuth's athletic department? We are off to the best start in school history. More than 100 wins. Not to mention the Wolf Pack men's basketball team has been in the top 10 of every national poll.

Oh yeah, did I mention that I was a competitive mayor?

You, my friends, are watching history in the making, right here at home.

We are all creating the competitive advantage for Reno in the years to come.

A stable and secure city budget.

The "pedal to the metal" of cyclers along Center Street.

A thriving riverfront district for vendors and restaurant owners.

A place to live for people of all walks of life.

A cleaner, brighter, and more loving Reno than ever before.

Be a part of that vision with us. We want your passions to grow, so you can become the next Emily Jaenson, Chris Ault, Jack Johnson, Jim Jefferies, David Wise, Shay Hampton or even Steve Sisolak.

The next part of Reno's great, game-changing history is you! Goodnight. God Bless.

Mom, by the way, I want to mention that you're my most MVP. I love you.