

**The 2019 State of the City Address
The City of Henderson
Mayor Debra March
January 22, 2019**

I'm so honored. Thank you very much. Wow! So, this is what a sold-out event looks like! This is amazing! This is truly amazing.

I know I am speaking for all of my colleagues on the City Council, as well as our staff, when I tell you how glad we are that all of you are here with us today. We had a terrific year, and I'm excited to share some of our milestone achievements, and to look at what lies ahead for our great City of Henderson.

Teressa, thank you for your opening remarks. And, Scott, thank you and the Henderson Chamber of Commerce for being such a great partner with the City of Henderson on so many important issues. We are grateful for your support.

And while we're talking about the Henderson Chamber of Commerce, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge one of the true leaders in our business community who passed away in 2018, after a courageous battle with Lou Gehrig's disease. Of course, I'm talking about Laird Noble Sanders, who, for many years, was the face and spirit of the Henderson Chamber of Commerce. Let's raise our glasses for a toast in his memory.

Here's to you, Laird, and always remember that you are the best! Thank you.

Now, let's also give a round of applause to the team here at Green Valley Ranch for a truly wonderful lunch.

I also want to thank my colleagues from Clark County, the cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, and Boulder City, who are here today as well. Though each of us has our own jurisdictional boundaries, we are still one region, and what affects one of us, affects all of us. I am thankful for your cooperation and your support. Thank you.

I also want to recognize our new governor, Steve Sisolak, who was here a little while ago, but had to leave. As a Clark County Commissioner, Governor Sisolak represented much of the City of Henderson and he's been in the trenches with us. He knows our concerns, and he knows our needs. Thank you, Steve.

A couple of months ago I was at the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast, and Kerry Bubolz, president of the Vegas Golden Knights, made a comment that I will never forget. In talking about the Golden Knight's commitment to Southern Nevada, he said, "Community is a contact sport." And, for me, that means that we must have contact with each other, that we exchange ideas, share experiences, and work together.

As in all sports, we combine our individual strengths, backgrounds, and talents to achieve something greater. But all contact sports are also hard and competitive, but they are always rewarding.

And that's what I think of when I look at this audience – you partner with us, you support us, and together we create better outcomes. Everyone in this room makes up the heart of our community, and that's what makes our community "Henderson Strong", and we thank you for that. Please give yourselves a round of applause.

This past year, Henderson was again recognized by Money Magazine as one of the 50 best places to live in America. We've been recognized as one of the 35 best cities for people 35 and under, and as one of the ten best places to raise children. Apartments.com lists Henderson as one of the best cities for snowbirds and retirees, and we've been ranked as one of the best cities for singles, and for pet lovers.

That's community my friends. From singles, to families, to seniors, to pets, Henderson has it all, and that's why we truly are "A place to call home." In addition, Henderson is continually recognized as one of the most business-friendly cities in the country and is one of the best places to start a business. And the list goes on, and on.

And so, what do our residents think? Well, in a recent community survey, we found that 96 percent of our residents are satisfied with our City's quality of life, and two-thirds are very satisfied. And we received extremely high marks for fire, police, public safety, as well as parks and recreation.

But let me take a moment to give credit where credit is due. This level of national achievement didn't start with my administration – it's the result of many years of hard work and effort. We can look back on the Council under former Mayor - - and now County Commissioner - - Jim Gibson, for example. Under his leadership, Henderson set the bar for safety, parks and recreation facilities, excellence in youth sports, business development, and even recognition as the sixth best walking city in America.

And I had the great pleasure of serving with Mayor Andy Hafen. During his time as mayor, Henderson was recognized as one of the top 25 places to retire, and was named as America's second safest city.

They established a great foundation, and today, we're building upon that success – the success that they created. Commissioner Gibson and Mayor Hafen are here with us today. Would you please stand so that we can recognize you? Thank you.

Just recently, our long-range plan, "Henderson Strong", received the 2018 Outstanding Planning Award from the American Planning Association. At the same time that the awards were presented, our very own Gerri Schroder - - Councilwoman Schroder received the Distinguished Leadership Award in the Elected Officials category.

I can tell you that I admire Councilwoman Schroder so much. She has served with distinction in three administrations and has been an integral voice in all of our City's activities and accomplishments over the last 12 years. Her accomplishments are numerous, and she's held in high esteem by her peers, which was made evident when she was elected president of the Nevada League of Cities and named to the Board of the National League of Cities.

Gerri has championed so many causes and has always worked hard to ensure that our historic neighborhoods are taken care of. Her positive impact on redevelopment areas, mature neighborhoods, and the revitalization of Downtown Henderson have been truly remarkable. Gerri gives from the heart in everything that she does, and she represents everything that's good about public service. This will be her last State of the City address as a Henderson councilmember, and we are really going to miss her.

Please join me in expressing our appreciation to Councilwoman Schroder for her leadership and dedication. Thank you.

Our community has shown time and time again that it's Henderson Strong, but we are also Henderson Smart! And what does that mean? As you saw in our opening video, this meaning depends on who you're asking.

For the City of Henderson, being Henderson Smart is about using tomorrow's technology today. It's about using our resources wisely and working efficiently. It's about providing a safe, vibrant community that all our residents and businesses are proud to call home. And as I continue in my second year as Mayor of the City of Henderson, I am thrilled about the exciting future that lays ahead for us.

More, and more people are moving into Henderson in pursuit of a quality of life - - the quality of life that our city has to offer. We currently have a population of more than 314,000 residents, with 500 to 800 new residents moving to the city each month. And as more, and more people and businesses make Henderson their home, we have to continue to meet their needs while remaining fiscally responsible.

I'm proud to say that coming out of the worst recession in our city's history, we have built a very stable financial foundation that includes having a "AA+" bond rating, which is the highest bond rating among local governments in Nevada. That's worth an applause.

We also have created substantial fiscal reserves and strengthened our ability to weather economic downturns. In addition, we've maintained the same low property tax rate for more than two decades. At 71 cents per \$100 of assessed value, this is the lowest rate when compared to the largest municipalities in Nevada, and among the lowest tax rates nationwide. This is impressive - - yeah, I think that's worth it.

This impressive financial position was made possible due to the strategic planning and financial skills of our new City Manager and Chief Executive Officer, Richard Derrick. We are truly fortunate that Richard possesses the valuable traits of talent, insight, and inspiration. Thank you, Richard, for all you do to make Henderson great!

In addition to Richard's efforts, so much of the phenomenal success that we've achieved over the last year is due to the incredible Executive Team that he has assembled. This team of amazing professionals includes Bristol Ellington, our new Chief Operating Officer and Deputy City Manager; Stephanie Garcia-Vause, who was appointed our new Chief Strategy Officer and Assistant City Manager; and rounding out the team is Rob Herr, our new Chief Infrastructure Officer and Assistant City Manager.

Thank you, Bristol, Stephanie, and Rob for hitting the ground running and meeting every challenge that's set before you. And I think they're out here at a table. Thank you. Thank you very much.

I also would like to thank our Chief Financial Officer Jim McIntosh, who was appointed to this position this past fall. In the short time that Jim has been in this role, he's already moved grounds by demonstrating the type of senior leadership and financial management skills that we expect from him. He has saved homeowners two million dollars through refunding two local improvement districts. Thank you, Jim, for your outstanding leadership and for your team, and the great work that they're doing. We appreciate that.

In addition to the great leadership of the Executive Team, the City Council is also working diligently to ensure that Henderson remains premier. Last year the Council engaged in a strategic planning exercise where we identified our top five strategic priorities. And these include: Community Safety, Economic Vitality, Livable Communities, High Performing Public Service, and Quality Education.

The first strategic priority that I'd like to speak about today is how we've strengthened and diversified the Henderson economy. And with the deal for the new home of the Raiders Corporate Headquarters and Practice Facility, we're off to a great start in Henderson! It's a unique opportunity for us – no, it's more than unique; it's incredible to have an NFL team select your city to call home. And welcome home, by the way. We appreciate it.

I'd like to thank the Raiders owner, Mark Davis; Team President, Mark Badain; and Don Webb, with the Raiders organization, for their tremendous commitment to our community. Would you please stand and be recognized? Thank you.

I'm also excited to note that the Raiders have committed to investing \$75 million into the first phase of their new Henderson practice facility and corporate headquarters. And we just celebrated the groundbreaking last week. We expect that this project will create more than 250 permanent jobs in our community, and over the next three decades will generate nearly 14 million dollars in property taxes that can be invested back in enhancing public safety, supporting education, and assisting with other Henderson priorities.

Everyone on the Council and in City management played a pivotal role in making this happen, but I want to give special thanks to Councilman John Marz, whose steadfast pursuit got us across the goal line. Thank you, Councilman.

We've already seen the impact of the Raider's facility in the recent land auction along St. Rose Parkway. Following a furious bidding process, an 8.15-acre City parcel was sold to Stable Development for an impressive \$8.25 million.

And finally, after years of impatient waiting – Costco is here in Henderson, and we couldn't be more thrilled. The new Costco is set in a 150,000-square-foot facility that will complete the new development known as St. Rose Square. And within a mile of Costco, Smith's Food and Drug opened a West Henderson site for their new 13.5-million-dollar dry-good distribution center, which will create 270 new jobs for our community.

Another ambitious project is located just east of the M Resort on St. Rose Parkway. The Henderson West development will be a 110-acre residential, commercial, and entertainment urban center that's envisioned as a new "live-work-play" community. And we anticipate it will become a significant addition to the western "gateway" of our City.

I want to acknowledge the work of Community Development and Services Director, Michael Tassi, and his team for their work to plan for the future growth of our community. Michael, thank you.

And if all that isn't enough, Inspirada is one of the top ten selling master-planned communities in the country and will have more than 13,000 homes at completion.

What many people also don't realize is that one of the keys to this incredible economic growth in West Henderson is the Henderson Executive Airport. This premier business aviation facility provides a strategically convenient location adjacent to places where people want to do business – like the Levi Strauss distribution facility, the M Resort, Cashman Equipment, and, of course, the future Raiders Corporate Headquarters and Training Facility.

A new joint project between All In Aviation and Lone Mountain Aviation will increase the Henderson airport's hangar capacity. At project completion, 25 new jobs will be created, and there will be close to 200 hangars available for business clients who want to come to Henderson. I want to congratulate All In Aviation President, Paul Sallach, and Lone Mountain Aviation President, Kenny Sherado, on this important expansion project. And they are here today.

Our efforts to attract new business and commercial expansion in Henderson are also being supported by the new wow valley brand campaign and we're already seeing positive results. I'd like to give my heartfelt thanks to our Economic Development team, led by Barbra Coffee, for their work that's so impactful in our community. Thank you, Barbra.

So, while we're looking at new growth opportunities, we cannot overlook our historic and mature neighborhoods like Downtown Henderson, Valley View, Lake Mead Parkway, original Green Valley, Boulder Highway, and Pittman. Through the City's redevelopment efforts, we're seeing a boost in mature areas like Pittman. The City was awarded funds to create the Pittman Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, which is working to build healthy, livable communities, and strengthen existing neighborhoods.

In addition, Habitat for Humanity has built several duplexes in Pittman that provide needed housing. Habitat's efforts have been championed by Grammy award-winning artist Carlos Santana, who not only supports their work, but also has donated five artistic benches created by local artists that will bring additional beauty to the community.

Carlos is also a passionate advocate for the City's partnership with the Clark County School District and local law enforcement, which promotes the See Something, Say Something, Do Something campaign to prevent cyber bullying, violence, at-risk behavior, sexual harassment, and suicide – each of which affects our students at concerning rates.

Carlos has made an incredible impact on our community, which is why I am thrilled that he and his lovely wife, and musical partner, Cindy Blackman Santana, are here with us today. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in giving a warm welcome to Grammy award-winning artist and philanthropist, Carlos Santana and Cindy Santana.

It's truly my pleasure and my honor to present them with the key to the City of Henderson, and to thank them for their leadership and all of the good work that they're doing. They have just huge hearts, and they love community, and they care about folks. And so, it's my honor to give them the key that opens the door to all of our hearts in the City of Henderson. Thank you.

Cindy Blackman Santana: It's really an honor to be involved with something that is so magnanimous in its outreach and its help of people. We always like to say people helping people is one of the most glorious things that you can do. And our lovely mayor here is an exemplary person who exhibits that I think in probably every breath that she takes. From what I've seen, and what I've heard with people who speak to her, it's a really great honor, and thank you so much.

Carlos Santana: Thank you. Thank you so much. You know, I feel enormous energy about being here in Las Vegas, because there's a group of people that I've been saying for about the last ten years, I call them "weapons of mass-compassion people". You know, the Three-Square food bank, Spread the Word, Boys and Girls Club, Las Vegas Rescue Mission, Andre Agassi's school – when you see the eyes and hands of these people, they're so deeply committed with passion and fire to be of service to healing, bringing unity and harmony.

So, I want to propose today that, hopefully, we can create an actual group called "weapons of mass-compassion people". These people, I would like to see that they get a card, a silver and black card, that says, "I am committed to being a weapon of mass-compassion people". And we do things of social service to the community, like I said. And when you have this card, wherever you go, you show the card, and you get a little consideration – a little love, because this is what we're offering.

The other part that I want to talk about is, we're committed to communicating with a Clear Channel and Live Nation, and asking them to allow us to have billboards, radio spots, and TV spots to present words that rescue people from themselves. There's a lot of people who are not happy unless they're miserable. There's a lot of people who are invested emotionally – invested emotionally on depression, frustration, and lack of self-worth. We want to rescue them. Now, you know, that's very delicate, because you don't want to tell people who to be, what to do, or how to do it; that's an imposition.

But when you invite people to remember what was given to you before you were born – this is the part where people go, what? – what was given to you before you were born is knowing, knowing that you are made out of light inside your heart, and you can create miracles and blessings. Those are not just for Jesus, or Mother Teresa, or the Pope, or entities like that. You and I have the same potion of love. If we just roll up our sleeves, your eyes – when I wake up, the first thing I say is, thank you, gratitude, appreciation, and somehow, I feel like I am between 17 to 27. Because I do wake up to be of service like you all, and I get more energy.

Thank you for being here, and we invite this thing to happen, "weapons of mass-compassion" group to be given birth here, and it will spread to the nation and worldwide. We are the ones that can transform fear everywhere. Transmogrify fear everywhere. Fragmented fear is boring, and predictable, and pathetic. I'm sick of it. And I want your joy and your light to change this infection, or fever of fear. I believe in you. Believe in yourself. Thank you for allowing us to be here and be part of this – as Cindy said, this glorious community. Peace.

Thank you, once again, for all that you do for our community, for the generous support that you provide. We are so honored to present you with the key to the City. Thank you.

Well, that's a hard act to follow. But there are so many wonderful things that are happening here in Henderson, that I'm confident you're going to want to hear more.

In addition to the revitalization that's taking place in Pittman, we are very excited about what's happening in Cadence, which is one of the nation's top 15 master-planned communities in our city. Cadence is revitalizing 2,200 acres in the Lake Mead Parkway and Boulder Highway area, that's being transformed into more than 13,000 homes. I want to recognize Mark Paris and Lee Farris for their years of hard work to create this community, and they're here with us today. Please give them a round of applause.

We're also thrilled about the changes taking place in Downtown Henderson, with new projects like Southend on Water, where Windom Kimsey and TSK Architects are making a four-million-dollar investment and expanding their Phase III Residential site.

Downtown is also home of the new Purple Heart Plaza. Last summer, the City held a wonderful dedication ceremony on Purple Heart Day, August 7th, to salute those veterans who were awarded this honor for their sacrifices. We appreciate them.

And this is only the beginning for Downtown Henderson. In fact, during the past 12 months, our business recruitment and outreach has led to ten new businesses opening in Downtown Water Street District. That's wonderful, just phenomenal. Including Juan's Flaming Fajitas, whose owners Juan and Darcy Vazquez made a 2.3-million-dollar investment in their restaurant and they're here with us today as well. Thank you, Juan and Darcy.

I'd also like to - - so, we welcome these great new businesses to our community. And I want you to know that we know how hard you worked to get this business up and running, and we want you to know that we're going to be here with you all along the way. So, thank you again.

The City's commitment to these priority areas is also demonstrated by the ten-million-dollar investment made in the Complete Streets Project in Downtown Henderson, a Livable Communities initiative, which will upgrade roads to be safe and appealing for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Please join me in thanking Acting Redevelopment Manager, Anthony Molloy, and his staff for their tremendous efforts in this area, along with our Public Works team, led by Director Ed McGuire. Thank you.

Another significant factor supporting Henderson's booming economy has been our ability to attract visitors to our City. Through our Destination Henderson marketing program, last year Henderson attracted an estimated 600,000 visitors, and the Convention Center hosted over 500 events with nearly 95,000 attendees. These visits generated over a million room nights in 2018. And that's close to a quarter billion dollars in room, food, and entertainment revenue. That's exciting for our community.

As a city, we must not only encourage a healthy economy, but healthy living as well. That's why we supported the Union Village, an innovative healthcare community, that's being constructed as an integrated campus in our Eastside Redevelopment area.

Development and the construction of Union Village continues to move forward with several projects anticipated for completion this year, including: the resort-style Well Apartments, the Fresenius Dialysis Center, and the Las Vegas Athletic Club.

We're also very proud of the success of the Henderson Hospital at Union Village. The hospital represents an 180-million-dollar investment that currently employs more than 900 people in the Eastside Redevelopment area. And Henderson Hospital has also recently opened a new free-standing ER on St. Rose Parkway. In addition, Henderson Hospital earned the national recognition for patient safety and quality, when it was named a top general hospital by the independent hospital watchdog group Leapfrog.

Dignity Health – St. Rose Dominican is another award-winning healthcare provider that's serving the needs of our community at the highest level. Each of Dignity's locations excels in its mission to provide unrivaled care to its patients. This includes the St. Rose de Lima Campus on Lake Mead Parkway that continues to earn recognition from Healthgrades, such as its five-star award win for hip fracture treatment three years in a row. Congratulations, St. Rose!

This leads me to perhaps the second, and most personal, strategic priority, which is focused on providing livable communities. Our award-winning parks and trails are part of what makes Henderson the premier community that we know, and love. In fact, most Henderson residents now live within a mile of a City park or a trail.

I'd like to tell you a wonderful story. You may have heard that the Henderson Historical Society initiated the creation of a new license plate celebrating our City. The society reached out to Sig Rogich, who grew up in Henderson, and asked him to develop a license plate design for our City.

Sig brilliantly chose our beautiful parks, trails, and bike paths as the symbol that brings our community together. I want to thank the Henderson Historical Society and Sig Rogich for this wonderful honor. By the way, these plates go on sale next month, and I hope everyone here puts one on their car.

Over the past year, our Parks and Recreation Department has hosted incredible celebrations like our Vegas Golden Knights viewing parties. Everyone say it with me, Go Knights Go! These events brought more than 19,000 people to our Henderson Pavilion. And the work of our talented Parks staff was even featured on ESPN.

In all, city-wide special events drew over 155,000 people to Henderson in 2018. I particularly want to commend the role of Councilman Dan Shaw that he played in our City parks. Years ago, Dan was a member and Chairman of the Henderson Parks and Recreation Board, and later served as Chairman of our Planning Commission. He was a vocal champion for the decisions that led to the wonderful park system that we cherish in Henderson today. Thank you, Councilman Shaw, for your ability to see the need to enhance the quality of life of Henderson residents for years to come. Thank you.

Our Parks and Recreation Department also oversees the City's outreach to our seniors – a vitally important and growing segment of our community. This includes expanding the City's Meals on Wheels program, which served nearly 200,000 meals last year, a ten percent increase from the previous year. And through our Senior Resource Center, we also provided referral and resource services for 6,500 seniors for essential programs, such as food pantries, energy assistance, and home health care.

I would like to note how proud we are of Shari Ferguson, our new Director of Parks and Recreation, as well as her phenomenal team for the great work that they do in our City.

Our third strategic priority is a commitment to providing the highest level of public service, transparency, and community engagement. Under the direction of our City Clerk, Sabrina Mercadante, the City has been busy making citizen engagement easier through voter registration initiatives, and citizen City Council briefings. Let's give Sabrina a round of applause. Thank you, Sabrina.

I'd also be remiss if I didn't commend Councilman Dan Stewart for his passion for public service and his work to improve the quality of life of his constituents. When the Legacy Golf Course shut down operations, he listened to the homeowners and did something about it. We now have a golf course closure ordinance, which is designed to protect affected neighborhoods against blight and deterioration, and Legacy Golf Course is once again open. Congratulations and thank you, Councilman Stewart.

Helen Keller once said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." That's why public engagement with our residents and business leaders is crucial to open government. We can't just sit in our offices and wait for people to come to us. So, we created our March On events, where we go out into the community and meet with our constituents, and I can tell you how valuable these have been. We've covered topics on everything from education, to safety, to water resources, to volunteering with the City.

At each of these events, we answer residents' questions and City staff provides critical information on important community issues. Oh, and by the way, if you didn't get the chance to attend any of my "March On" events, you can watch videos on our website at cityofhenderson.com

Now it's time to talk about the fourth, and one of the most critical, Council priorities, Public Safety. Henderson is already recognized as one of the safest cities in America. So, how do we take our success to the next level? Well, let me tell you how, by putting 42 more police officers on the streets. And harnessing data-driven intelligence to increase accountability and provide in-depth analysis of crime problems throughout the City, then using that information to produce proactive policing. And by developing crisis intervention training to better prepare officers when dealing with citizens who might be suffering from mental illness.

I want to thank our Chief, LaTasha Watson, and her leadership team for implementing these initiatives. Thank you. And most of all, I'm so proud of our officers for selflessly placing themselves in harm's way and protecting us each day. They are the very best in the business. Thank you.

And that leads me to another point of pride. You saw the members of the Henderson Fire Department in the Joint Henderson Honor Guard earlier today. But did you know that we are the home to the only fire department in the United States to be triple-accredited? And as you can see from the slide now on the screen, Henderson has earned superior ratings in all categories. No one in the country has a better fire department than we have in Henderson. And Chief Shawn White is committed to doing more. Just this month, 16 new firefighters graduated from our 46th academy. And we'll be building a new fire station at Hidden Falls Park.

We've also partnered with the Local International Association of Fire Fighters to create innovative solutions to address increased call volume. One of our initiatives was the addition of two advanced life support rescue units on a flexible schedule to meet peak demand. What does this mean? We all know that every minute counts in a medical emergency. By adding resources and by saving time, we are saving lives. Thank you to Chief White and the brave men and women on his team who provide such great public service.

All of these things we've talked about are what makes us "Henderson Strong". But we're also committed to making "Henderson Smart" through our support of education. Our Council is committed to improving education because we want Henderson schools to be the best in the state and in the country. So, even though the City doesn't have prescribed authority over schools or education priorities, that doesn't mean that we're just sitting on the sidelines.

As many of you know, I recently became a grandmother. Thank you. Strengthening our education system is not just about taking care of today's generation of students; it's also about preparing the way for my granddaughter, Ayla Marie's generation, as well. The entire Council has made it a priority to support educational initiatives, and to advocate for school facility improvement, professional development for teachers, and an innovative program designed to treat students suffering from childhood trauma.

I want to give a special note of thanks to Councilmen Shaw and Councilman Dan Stewart, and City Attorney Nick Vaskov and his team for their dedication to ensuring that a portion of the City's revenues from recreational marijuana go directly to education. And we are the first city in the state to make this investment in our kids. So, if you're going to buy...buy in Henderson.

One of the things I am most proud of, however, is our new education appreciation and recognition initiative. This past year, the Henderson Council adopted the Mayor's Honor Roll, an award that recognizes Henderson students, parents, teachers, and administrators who demonstrate exemplary achievement.

One of our honorees is Mark Reed, a physics teacher at Basic High School, who created an afternoon robotics club which drew so much interest that it turned out to be an actual credited class. But the story doesn't stop there. Mr. Reed and his robotics team have won the state Robotics Championship two years in a row. And they also participated in the U.S. Open Robotics Championship and in the Vex Robotics World Championship last April. Mark gave of his own time to start a program that's giving his students real world experience in robotics engineering that we know will pay big dividends in the future.

Another award recipient was Benjamin Long, a student at Bob Miller Middle School. Not only does Benjamin keep a robust academic schedule, but he also plays saxophone in the jazz band, and is goalie in the school's lacrosse team. But that's not why he was given the award. On top of his already busy schedule, Benjamin found time to organize and prepare Thanksgiving dinner for three refugee families from Africa.

Friends, that's heart, that's selflessness, and that's human compassion. We all have a lot to learn from the examples set by Benjamin. He's here today with his parents. Would you please stand and be recognized, Benjamin?

These are just a couple of the champions of education that we are recognizing, but there are so many more. How about a hand for all our teachers, our principals, our administrators, and support staff who are preparing our children and building our future?

In just a few weeks, the 80th session of the Nevada State Legislature will convene, and one of the most important issues will be education. Last month, our Council passed a resolution supporting “Fund Our Future Nevada,” a coalition dedicated to ensuring that our schools have the needed resources needed to provide quality education for all our students. We look forward to working with Governor Sisolak and our State legislators to strengthen education, and to increase resources for our classrooms.

Henderson is also fortunate to be home to great institutions of higher education like Nevada State College, Touro University, Roseman College, and CSN Henderson, among others, and we will continue to support the great work that they are doing. Let’s give them all a round of applause!

Being “Henderson Smart” is also about using tomorrow’s technology today. And that’s why Henderson has adopted a leadership role in Smart City Technology. Edward McMahon, my friend and a member of the Conservation Fund, once said, “Growth is inevitable and desirable, but destruction of community character is not. The question is not whether your part of the world is going to change. The question is how.”

Whether it’s in traffic control, emergency medical services, or City government functions, or energy and water management, integration of Smart City Technology is essential in achieving the vision we have for Henderson’s growth. And how are we doing? Well, a couple of months ago, the Center for Digital Government ranked Henderson as the sixth highest rated city, of our size in the country, for using technology to improve the lives of residents.

Number six out of hundreds of similar communities. That’s leadership! That’s “Henderson Smart”! I particularly want to thank Laura Fucci, our Director of Information Technology, for leading this effort. Thank you, Laura.

Now, let me see. Am I forgetting something? Oh, yeah, Google! Henderson is going to be the home of Google’s new 600-million-dollar data center that will support North American services for YouTube, Google Calendar, and Gmail, and we couldn’t be more thrilled.

At this buildout, this project will consist of approximately 500,000 square feet of facilities on 64 acres, and when fully operational early next year, will employ up to 200 workers with an average annual salary of \$65,000, nearly twice the average for Nevada workers. And projections show that Google will bring in more than \$94 million in tax revenue over the next 20 years. This is a rare opportunity because there are only 13 Google data centers globally, and just six of them are in the United States.

We appreciate the Governor’s Office for Economic Development for providing the financial incentives that made this business initiative a reality. I want to thank our City staff for their incredible strategic support. Thank you.

Henderson is quickly becoming a hub for technology and innovation. And hosting an internationally recognized brand like Google, will position us as a destination for other technology companies looking to relocate and to expand.

In closing, I would like to emphasize that our City is both “Henderson Smart” and “Henderson Strong”, thanks to an incredible team of dedicated professionals, local businesses, community partners, and a truly engaged public.

It continues to be my honor to lead the City of Henderson as your mayor, and I look forward to building on the programs and initiatives that are making this the city of the future.

Eleanor Roosevelt, one of my role models, once said, “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.” I believe in Henderson’s future, and I know you do, too. Working together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

Thank you and God bless each and every one of you. Thank you.