(**Lissa)**. . . .Hello, I am Mayor Pro Tem Lissa Smith and I love Plano because although we are a vibrant cosmopolitan community of 275,000 people we still have a small town feel. . . .

(**Ben)** . . . .Hello, I am Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Ben Harris and I love Plano because its where I have always called home and I feel fortunate to raise my kids in the best city in America. . . . . .

(**Lissa)** . . . .Thank you. . .It’s an honor to join you this evening for the State of the City Address. . .Ben and I have served on council for the past 7+ years and our term will conclude in May. . . . .

(**Ben)** . . . .Can you believe it has been nearly eight years? . . .When we started our first term your kids Blake and Alexis were teenagers in high school and now they have grown into busy young professionals. . . . .

(**Lissa)** . . . .And you and Abby were enjoying your first born daughter. . Laney . . .and shortly thereafter Walker was born. . .He has grown into an avid baseball and football player and Laney is a dancer extraordinaire. When we started our first term on Council. . .Plano’s population was 258,000 and today it is 275,000. . .Bruce Glasscock was the deputy City Manager and now he is the City Manager. There was no Legacy West. . .nor had our downtown undergone its amazing revitalization. . . and remember when we had just a few dining options downtown. . .McCall Plaza had not been planned. . .the area had not been designated an Arts District and the vibrant downtown nightlife was almost non-existent. . . .

(**Ben)** . . . .We first served with Mayor Dyer and over the years we have had the privilege of working with many other great council members. . . . .. In May of 2013 we were pleased and honored to begin serving with our newly elected Mayor. . . .Harry LaRosiliere. . . .

(**Lissa)** . . . .I met Harry through Leadership Plano where we served on the board together. . .In fact, I handed him his first and only loss in an election when we both vied for chairman. . . . of course he says he doesn’t remember that. . . . . . .

(**Ben)** . . . .I met Harry at a candidate forum in 2008 when he was running for re-election on City Council…There were 5 attendees. . . . . .2 fell asleep and 3 came to eat the free cookies. . .At that point I knew Harry was destined to serve Plano well for a long, long time. . .In the past three and one half years we have enjoyed many successes like welcoming Toyota, FedEx Office, Liberty Mutual, Fannie Mae and JPMorgan Chase to our community. . . . . .We were thrilled with the announcement of the Legacy West project. . . . . .and when Downtown was named “A great place to live in America” . . . . . .and we remain delighted about the unprecedented renaissance that is taking place all across Plano. . . . .One of Mayor Harry's passions is improving the lives of the children in our community.

(**Lissa)** . . . .In fact, his Plano Promise is that the city will protect you, schools will educate you and our community will nourish you.

(**Ben**) Harry has an uncanny ability to connect with children as evidenced by my daughter Laney who is one of his biggest fans. To this day she is somewhat unimpressed by her own father's service on the City Council but thinks its really cool that she is friends with the mayor. . . .

(**Lissa**) And he not only relates well to our youngest residents, he also relates to Millennial. HE is the selfie king as you can see here with my son and daughter Blake and Alexis at the Christmas. We look forward to the future as Plano continues to be the regional leader in transportation, education and water. . .We are confident the Mayor and future council members will remain visionary to maintain Plano’s excellence. We look forward to being on the other side as these new leaders emerge. . .We wish them all the best. . . . . .And without further ado. . .please welcome my friend Harry LaRosiliere, Mayor of Plano. . . . .

(**Mayor**) Thank you Lissa and Ben for the introduction. . . .And to both of you….thank you for your leadership but most of all for your friendship. . . .We have accomplished so much over the past three and a half years. .and your service on council has spanned the past 8 years. . . . .We would not be the city we are today if not for the dedication and commitment you’ve shown. . . . .I would like to take a moment and ask everyone to give them a hand. . (applause) . . .

*I also want to take a moment to thank a few other very special people in my life*. . . *my wife, Tracy*. . . *and my daughters Brianna and Maya*. . . .*Brianna was not able to attend last year but is here tonight*. . . . .*thank you all for your love and support*. . . . .*And, I would like to take the privilege to make a special birthday wish. . . . .January 17 is Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday and he is a virtual mentor of mine but this person’s birthday is even more special than he is to me*. . . . .*and that is my sister Marthe. . . . .Happy Birthday Marthe*. . . . .*I wish you were here with us*. . . . .*but enjoy your special day as you are in my thoughts*. . . . .

And hello everyone. . . . .It’s an honor to deliver the Plano State of City Address this evening. . . . .Plano has been My Home for 23 years and I still cannot imagine living or working anyplace else. . . . .We’ve all heard the saying, “perception is reality.” . . . . .Well, tonight I want to ask you this question. . . . .“What is your perception of Plano?” . . . . . “How do you define the city where you live?” . . . . .

As you think about that answer, I’m going to share 5 quick facts as we define Plano. . . . .1. . . .Plano is one of the fastest growing cities in North TX. . . . .2. . .Plano has a three-quarter Billion Dollar Budget. . . . .3. .Plano has 3,135 fire hydrants scattered across the entire city. . .4. . . .Plano’s Business sector is mostly comprised of Big Businesses. . .and 5. . . .Over 64% of PISD’s students are non-Caucasian. . . . .Now here is what I didn’t tell you. . . . .Not all of that is true. . . . .Because the reality is we are not the fastest growing city in North Texas. . . . . . .In fact we have only grown by one percent annually over the last three years. . .about 2,700 annually. . . . .Yes, We are a big city. . . so, when you count the Capital Improvement Program our budget is almost 750 million dollars. . . . .and, no we actually don’t have 3,135 fire hydrants. . . . .we have 5 times that amount. . . . .we actually have 15,677. . . . .68% of our businesses are small businesses. . . . .and that is the backbone of our local economy. . . . . .and yes 64% of our PISD students are non-Caucasian. . . . .showing we are truly a rich, diverse community. . . . .I wonder how you did on the quiz. . . . .and what was my point for this quiz? . . . . .

You see. . . . .your perception of Plano defines your reality. . . . .So tonight I would like to share with you my perception of #MyPlano. . . . .Today, my Plano is the nexus of economic activity in North Texas. . . . .it is the model for service excellence. . . . .My Plano is a big city and a strong community. . . . .But you know. . .My Plano is something different for me today than it was 10 to 20 years ago. . . . .and I know it will change over the next ten to twenty years ahead. . . . .

Twenty years ago when Tracy and I were a young couple. . . .we enjoyed eating out and trying new cuisines. . . .and we looked for fun things to do in our spare time. . . . .and actually believe it or not we used to go to Dallas (shhhh). . . . Once we had a family, we enjoyed spending time with our preschoolers at the nearby neighborhood parks. . . .in fact for the purpose of full disclosure. . . . .Sunday was park time for me to take my girls to play. . . . .because the Texas sun would wear them down so much that by the time we got home they wanted a nap. . . . .and so did I. . . . .as they grew older our play time became practice time for basketball or soccer. . . . .and as they got even older we enjoyed riding our bicycles on the many bike trails that the city offers. . . . .and now that Tracy and I are close to joining the empty nesters club. . . . .we enjoy Plano in so many different ways. . . .we enjoy going to the movies. . . . .dining out with friends. . . . .shopping…and playing tennis and golf. . . . . *(change tone)* . . . . .

We often like to talk about the progress Plano has made over the past two decades. . . . .but we really appreciate knowing that our Plano remains the same at its core. . . . .and we’re grateful the city provides an abundance of amenities for everyone regardless of their age and their life stage. . . . .

At last year’s State of the City event. . . . .we declared the era of Plano 3.0. . . . .we defined ourselves as a world-class city that comfortably competes on the global stage for any business, family or individual looking for a place to call home. . . . .and we talked about our progression from a bedroom community to a big suburb. . . . .to who we are today. . . a self-sustained city with our own identity. . . .But before we go any further, let’s consider how we arrived. . . .

The Plano 3.0 era arrived as a result of our prior thoughtful and visionary leaders spanning from elected officials to community volunteers. . . .All were fully invested and committed to our City’s success. . . . .These visionary leaders had a perception of the city that manifested as the reality we’re experiencing today. . . . .These leaders believed that they could and would accomplish a culture of service excellence. . . . .Our past leaders were **all in**. . . . .and today we are fully committed to this culture as well. . . . .They accepted the challenges of their time, seizing their moment in Plano’s timeline to be intentional. . . . .As your Mayor . . .I can comfortably and confidently say that with the will of our citizens, the vision of our Council, and the skill of our staff. . . . .there is absolutely nothing we cannot accomplish together in My Plano. . . . . *(pause and Applause)* . . . . .

There are very few coincidences in My Plano. . . . .Let’s consider our recent economic newsmaker in Legacy. . . . .I can remember a decade ago when I was a newly elected City Council Member. . . . .we discussed reaching out to young professionals so they could see Plano as a place they could call home in every sense of the word. . . . .because an infusion of youth will help make any city vibrant. . . . .and our city needed that. . . . .So what did we do? . . . . .We started by creating a sense of place in a development called Legacy Town Center. . . . .Back then in 2008 when we looked across the tollway there were cows grazing. . . . .I thought, “How cool would it be if you continued the magic here on the other side?” . . . . .Well today that magic is here and that area is covered with cranes. and hundreds of people creating what we all know now as the Legacy Business Park. . . . .By the way how are we doing in terms of bringing those young folks to our community? . . . . .Today. . .nine short years later the median age in Plano is 38 years old. . . . .and just shy of 50% of our population is under the age of 35. . .with 20% of them being Millennials and now Plano is a young community. . . . .

I also remember the empty storefronts in Downtown. . . . .We hired a consultant to tell us what the possibilities were. . . . .He said first we had to make an intentional decision about what we wanted downtown Plano to be. . . . .The decision was ours because our perception of downtown would become our reality. . . . .Now downtown Plano is unlike any other place. . . . .it is funky and eclectic. . . .It’s been recognized as a Cultural Arts District and “A Great Place to Live in America.” . . . .When you think about it this visionary thinking has been the story of Plano for a long time. . . . .

Let’s listen to a couple of our former Mayors share their memories of what Plano looked like to them. . . . .and the decisions they had to make as they envisioned Plano’s future. . . . .Listening to them, I realize that even when dealing with difficult and contentious decisions. . . . .we have proven that we will serve our citizens well over time. . . . .The reality is. . . . .we choose to create a brighter future for ourselves. . . . .The Plano we have grown into. . . . .My Plano is our collective home. . . . .My Plano is a home for everyone. . *(pause)* . . . . .

In our city everyone matters. . . . .According to Money Magazine My Plano is the best place to live in Texas and the third best place to live in the nation. . . . .and this accolade is an acknowledgement of the many wonderful things happening in our city. . .*(Pause)* . . The reality is. . . . .we all own a piece of My Plano. . . . .and we all play a part in its evolution. . . . .

When I was elected Mayor back in May of 2013. . . . .by the way that seems like a really long time ago! . . . . .I remember a Dallas Morning News reporter asking me. . . .“What is your vision for Plano?” . . . . .You know on the surface, my answer sounded pretty uninspired. . . .*(long pause)* . . . . .But the truth is: . .I did want Plano to stay the same. . . . .and at our core, we have remained true to who we are. . . . .We are the city we have always been. . . . .a city that delivers excellence, a safe city , a city with terrific schools. . . . .one that has an abundance of educational and recreational opportunities. . . . .and most importantly. . . . .we are a city that cares for one another. . . . .a city that honors our future…and honors our children. .(pause) . . . . .With all that has stayed the same, let’s also acknowledge we’ve grown up. . . . .and as a result there are some things that are different. . . . .

Take our schools for example. . . . .Back in 1983 there was a young lady who was in the first graduating class of Plano East Senior High School. . . . .I have heard her say many times that education changed her life. . . . .This still young lady is now the School Board President for PISD. . . . .Lets hear her thoughts on how things have changed. . . . .by the way she insisted I refer to her as Madame President . . . . .While some things have changed as we have matured. . . . .Has our progress stopped? . . . . .Well. . . .what do you think? . . . . .

With all that is happening in our city right now. . . . .this is nothing short of an unprecedented renaissance. . . . .We are in a new phase of our timeline. There is so much more to do and so many more opportunities that lie before us. . . . .Back in the 1990’s. . . . .JC Penney’s decision to relocate to Plano was the big announcement that jump-started our role as the job creator and the economic driver of Collin County. . . . .Shortly after that .....Ironically the recent jumpstart in our City came from JCPenney again from the decision to unlock 240 acres in the northwest quadrant of our city that I have renamed the Center of the Universe. . . . . .It is about to explode because 2017 is the year of the Big Bang. . . . .It’s all coming together. . . . .My Plano. . . . .OUR Plano will be quite remarkable. . . . .

So let’s talk about what’s happening this year. . . . .Some long anticipated projects will be fully open for all to enjoy. . . . .We are going to see new development. . . . .job creation. . . . .additional office and retail space. . . . .along with more new restaurants. . . . .All of this new growth in our business sector will help us continue to provide our citizens with amenities and activities that will enhance the quality of our lives. But it is not only about the new, it's about redevelopment as well . . . .And the revenues from all of this will allow us to keep our tax rate one of the lowest in the region. . . . .

You see. . . Here’s what we do. . .we invest in our people. . . we invest in our community. . . .we grow and diversify our tax base. . . . .and this allows us to deliver quality service at the lowest rate. . . . .That’s what I refer to as the Plano formula. . . .(Applause) . . . . .And this year. . . . .the year of the Big Bang we have rightfully, appropriately and deservingly assumed the position of the third cornerstone in the metroplex. . . . .Which will now and forever be known as the D-FW-P! . *(pause/applause)* . . . . .

In 2017 we will have amenities in place that will be landmarks in the region. . . . .and in our hearts and in our minds. . . . .These new dining, shopping and retail sites will be places for a first date. . .a birthday. . .a marriage proposal. . . .a job promotion. . . and even a Golden Wedding Anniversary. . . .all of those moments will have special significance in our lives and in your Plano and My Plano. . . . .People always ask me why am I so proud of Plano? . . . .

I am proud of Plano because we listen. . . . .We listen to what matters most to our citizens. . . . .You consistently say you want a safe city…you want quality education. . . . .you want to enjoy amenities and a high quality of life. . . . .In fact in our last citizen survey said 94% of you were satisfied with our level of service in our city. . . . .

And because we listen….in this upcoming year we have budgeted 70 new public safety officers. . . . .We have allocated funds to upgrade the turf at Carpenter Recreation Center and will add a therapeutic pool there as well. . . . .We are upgrading our senior center. . . . .And, on top of this, we’ve recently opened amenities like the Go Ape Zip Line and the wave rider at Jack Carter Pool. . . . .And soon to come is the long-awaited skate park, an adaptive recreation park and Pickle Ball leagues. . . . .All of this comes with the first ax rate cut in 15 years to make my Plano, our Plano, a Plano for ALL. (applause) . . . . .

Technology will continue to keep us better connected. . . . .At our recent Town Hall meeting we had nearly 3,000 people participate on-line to learn valuable information about the city. . . . .which is a far cry from a decade ago when I remember only having about 15 people at our Neighborhood Roundtables. . . . .We have made a conscious decision to maintain a high-level of communication. . . . .Through Plano City Call an opt in alert system we are going to give you information in real time for weather and traffic to help keep you safe. . . . .For example we will let you know when we are testing the outdoor warning siren. . . . .We will keep you moving in your car. . . . .Traffic alerts will come in real time. . . . .And then we also have MapIt Plano. . . . .our recently upgraded geographic mapping system that makes it easy to immediately find all the wonderful things in our city. . . . .like libraries, practice fields, rec centers. . . . .and even help with finding lost pets and confirming the day your of your trash pick-up. . . . .

And then what about transparency. . . . .The Plano Performance Portal measures City Services for everyone to see exactly how we are doing. . . . .the Open Budget Portal provides transparency in how the city is being a good steward of your tax dollars. . . . .The bottom line is that if you want to be engaged and informed, we give you a path to be connected. . . . .As I mentioned earlier, we have a history of serving our citizens well. . . . .just like it was for prior Mayors as they tackled challenges of the day. . . . .we stand ready to address the challenges that are before us. . . .and we will remain the city you are proud to call home. . . (applause) . . . . .

Another question. . . . .Has anybody here been stuck in traffic lately? . . . . .Well you must not have been traveling in Plano. . . . .well seriously. . . . .I have been caught there too. . . . .Ease in mobility is something we want to facilitate. . . .In fact, this past year alone we have allocated $81MM for mobility and roads. . . . .If you look over the past five years. . . . .we have increased our funding to upgrade aesthetics and to enhance mobility by 123%. . . . .but you can’t fix traffic with money and concrete alone. . . . .it takes innovation. . . . .The typical approach to solving transportation is deciding to take more “right of way” easements, build more roads with the thought it will allow more cars to move easily across the city. . . . .But, we are Plano. . . . .the City of Excellence. . . . .and we do things differently. . . . .We are regional leaders and we will work together with you by shifting the paradigm from one car one driver to alternate means. . . . .

I am here to tell you. . . . .We as your city government CANNOT do it alone. . . . .but we can do it with your help. . . . .Our recent study showed us that 40% of our drivers are willing to try something different. . . . .And the only way we can improve mobility in Plano and in our region is a shift in mindset. . . . .for instance we will work with our corporate partners to collaborate and coordinate staggered work hours. . . . .so in the future it is likely that certain companies will implement flex hours. . . . .with employees starting work at 7:00 am and finishing their day by 3:00 pm. . . . .In the future you’ll will likely see last mile services where electric cars be will available for people to ride into our business districts. . . . .and ride sharing will be commonplace. . . . .that means we will see commuters take DART to the Parker Road Station and will share an electric rental car for the day into our business districts. . . . .and another group who works in the same building may share a UBER or LYFT service. . . . .In 2017 they will be able to take an express bus route to transport them across town in 15 minutes. . . . .All of this is designed to decrease single drivers from being on the road during peak traffic hours. . . . .Also within the massive Legacy Business Park where over 100 thousand people work during the day. . . . .these employees may use a van pool or a bike share program. . . . .As the northern most city with DART we will continue to leverage that asset. . . . .and we will work with them to provide circular routes. . . . .so that during the day if you didn’t come to work with your car. . . . .you can still move within the business park conveniently and easily. . . . .

Do I have to remind you this is the hometown of the world largest and most innovative automobile company? . . . . . .A company that invests approximately $1MM a day in research and development with a singular focus to improve our lives through safe and efficient transportation. . . . .I have a feeling they will help us. . . . .

But, here in Plano we like to say we have smart people. . . . .and we are a smart place. .so we have recruited our best and brightest minds to tackle our mobility issues. . . . .Fortunately they agreed to help us on a pro bono basis. . . . .and they have provided some very creative ideas for us to think about going forward. . . . .Tell me what you think. . . . . (look at screen) . . . . .I don’t know about you, but with future engineers like them I’m excited about our future. . . . ..and the bottom line is the City of Plano is innovative and we know mobility is an important component of our quality of life. . . . .and we will stay laser focused on delivering that value for our citizens. . . . .And just as you heard from our prior mayors. . . . .we too are going to tackle the challenges of today and deliver long-term solutions for tomorrow successfully together. . . . .

20 minutes ago I asked you. . . . .What is your perception of Plano? . . . . .How do you see the City you love? . . . . .What makes you Plano Proud? . . . . .Take out your phone right now and go to your favorite social media site. . . .(pause) . . . . .I challenge you to give me your answer to this right now. . . . .I am going to give you mine. . . . ..*(point to #My Plano screen and pause for 10 seconds)* . . . . .I don’t know about you. . . . .I love Plano. . . . .I think Plano is beautiful. . . . .it is the only place I want to live. . . . .and I want you ALL to live here with me in My Plano. . . . .in the DFW-P. . . . .Thank you. . . . . *(music plays while video is going)*