

**Mayor Rusty Bailey Riverside, California**

**State of the City Address January 19, 2017**

**State of the City 2017 – The Power of Partnerships**

The world is a much different place than when I stood here a year ago. Leadership changes at home and abroad can bring angst and uncertainty. And it's easy to fall into a winning or losing mentality if you come from a viewpoint of political parties, district boundaries, or national interests.

But if you take a moment and look through the lens of community, you can see the possibilities in front of you -- and you can see partners, with common goals for our city, who are ready to collaborate and make things happen.

You have heard today about the Air Resources Board coming to town, and how the power of partnership made that happen.

As the CPO of the city -- that’s Chief Partnership Officer -- let me assure you that the group that organized and enticed CARB to relocate continues to meet, and work, toward leveraging that victory into future gains in employment and investment for our region, and we will continue to embrace their employees as they transition into our community.

Just this week, the working group submitted an application, as a partnership, to bring VW settlement dollars to the Innovation District, a place-based strategy to connect the innovative institutions working in Riverside with the creative community that lives here.

Think of it as laboratories mashing up with art studios, incubators inside maker spaces, classrooms connected to computer networks, with fiber technology as the backbone and historic packing houses as the backdrop.

The Innovation District working group will host a series of community visioning sessions in the next few months, and I want to thank them for their careful work and thoughtful debate over the last several months.

I also want to thank our higher education partners for traveling to our sister city in Vietnam for the first time, as we connect with Can Tho toward creating an English Language Institute and start a joint research project to save the Mekong Delta from salt water intrusion. Just like our very own Grow Riverside movement, which is developing future farmers and jobs for our region, this rice-saving project will keep a stable source of food production for Southeast Asia.

To this point, please join me in extending a warm Riverside welcome to another international partner, newly inaugurated Ensenada Mayor Marco Novelo and his wife, Mirna. While we have been friends for years, Marco, and we have common interests and ideas for exporting local goods through our sister city partnership, now that you are the Mayor, *mi hermano*, it’s time to move our vision into action. I look forward to supporting you, and Ensenada, over the years to come, advancing our friendship and accelerating our two cities’ economic relationship, because that is the power of partnership.

Our freedom to innovate and grow our economy is protected by our armed forces. Many thanks go out to our military partners in the region for the national security you provide us and for the economic impact you create in and around Riverside.

If you didn’t know, between March Air Reserve Base and the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Norco, our military institutions contribute over $900 million into the local economy, generating thousands of jobs over their decades of service.

Another great partner in terms of economic impact is our very own Riverside Public Utilities, whose 480 million dollars invested in last year alone created opportunities for local business and local employment. With a focus on the future through RPUs Utility 2.0 strategic plan, and Fiber Network project, we will continue to attract business and development in our city for future generations of entrepreneurs and residents. Our city is more resilient thanks to the vision of our forefathers, who formed and were good stewards of our utilities.

I also need to recognize the good work of the Ontario Airport Authority and Ontario City Council, who took the lead on setting Ontario Free. Now we need to do our part by flying Ontario at every chance we get. So Fly Ontario, and Buy Riverside! Congratulations to the Riverside Auto Center for setting a new sales record last year. Over 46,000 vehicles were sold, generating more sales tax than any other entity in our city. Let us all spread the word on buying Riverside, and set a target at 50,000 vehicles sold in 2017, especially with Measure Z kicking in.

Investing in the future has been a Riverside trait since its founding. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all who supported the local Measure Z this last year. The partnership between the diverse Chambers of Commerce and local government was never stronger than when we educated the voters about the long-term needs of our community, with respect to public safety, as well as infrastructure investment. Thanks to the City Council, the City executive leadership team, and the many private sector partners, Riverside will have another Renaissance over the next 20 years with improvements to its fire services, police services, road maintenance and homeless services, just to name a few.

I think we may even see the design for a new downtown library by the end of this year. What do you think, City Manager?

The bottom line with Measure Z is that it will improve all Riversiders’ quality of life and will inspire future generations to live, and work, and shop in our beloved city. Once again, thank you all for believing in our collective future and for supporting Measure Z.

You can’t have great partnerships without great partners. Riverside lost some very important partners this last year. Most recently, a beloved public servant named John Benoit left us as a county Supervisor, but he also served us as a law enforcement officer, and as our Assemblyman, before succumbing to cancer last month.

I don’t know about you, but I miss General Stan Brown, that dogmatic personality that would tell you like it was -- or how things should be -- regardless if you were a CEO, a General, or a Mayor. His leadership and integrity and ability to form lasting partnerships brought Riverside National Cemetery to fruition, and thereby thousands, if not millions, of people paying tribute to our veterans on that hallowed ground.

And you can't drive anywhere in this region without your tires rolling over one of Jack Yeager's construction projects. Jack understood partnerships, whether as a brother in a family-owned business or as a UC Regent and financial supporter throughout Riverside for more than seven decades. His generosity and humility is what we may miss the most, especially in this era of selfies and Facebook Live. He lived life for others more than for himself, which is what I look for in a partner; unselfishness, first and foremost.

Sylvia Martin brought life to the party. As one friend said at her funeral, you couldn't escape her or her many service learning projects. A consummate educator and friend, she looked for ways to share others and their talents with the world. Hence her capstone project on top of City Hall, a space dedicated to diversity called the Grier Pavilion. I am grateful for her service and dedication to this community.

And what an incredible legacy Dr. Pamela Clute has left us. Thousands of her students will continue to impact our lives through science, technology, engineering and math. Her spirit lives in classrooms and through educators across the country who witnessed one of the best teachers of her time, creating origami algorithms and geometrical configurations that brought mathematics to life for generations of children.

These partners changed Riverside for the better. May God bless them, their families and their legacies. We look now to the next generation of movers and shakers to continue what they have started in their career fields and throughout this community. Their ripple effects have inspired me, and countless others, to look at partnerships as the answer to the difficult challenges we face as a city and a region. Through their many achievements, relationships and investments, they will never be forgotten.

Certainly, families are an essential partner to us, especially as individuals. So I would like to recognize my greatest partner and supporter here tonight, Judy Bailey. Thank you, dear, for your unconditional love and support over numerous campaigns, both political and familial. You know why I am here, on this stage, and that God placed us here, as partners, to serve our hometown. Thank you for being a great mother, a great friend and my greatest partner. I love you very much.

Now let me introduce you to some other great partners in our city, who will share their experiences and thoughts related to the Power of Partnership. It’s awesome to see the next generation of leaders ready to stand together, with their city and with each other, toward addressing the issues of importance to our collective future.

So let me be clear about why I’m tweaking the format of the speech a bit, other than this is the 40th State of the City Address, and I believe it’s always good to keep people on their toes with a bit of change here and there.

Riverside has a truly unique culture of collaboration that unites the various sectors and stakeholders in our community. Our strategic vision called Seizing Our Destiny demands that we build consensus and look to others for help both when the need arises, but also when times are good. Finances are improving, quality of life continues to rise, the City Council has adopted a five-year strategic plan, and everyone is on the same page at City Hall. So now it’s time to focus on implementation.

With these interviews, it is my hope that you and your organizations will take time today, and take some time this year, to reflect upon what we have accomplished by leveraging partnerships. And what better way to illustrate that, than to share the stage with some of our most committed partners.

With that, let me invite out Ed Tessier of Arteco Partners, the entrepreneurial group selected to create The Riverside Food Lab, an innovative restaurant space inside the Fox Entertainment Plaza.

Assistant Superintendent for Research, Innovation and Technology Renee Hill is a SmartRiverside Board Member and advocate for both inclusive learning communities and developing a 21st century workforce.

Social entrepreneur Damien O’Farrell is a local boy who has done more than just good. He is the CEO of Path of Life, which is the largest housing and shelter provider to the homeless in Riverside County.

Drew Oberjuerge is the Executive Director of the Riverside Art Museum. She is representing the arts community and more on stage today, and proves that I am true partner in production of this event, because she is a USC Trojan, and I am a UCLA Bruin.

(PANEL DISCUSSION)

Thanks again to the panel of partners that joined me today. I may be the one delivering the most content tonight, but the State of the City Address is not about me. It's about we! It's about how we get things done, collectively, in our community. It’s about how we look at challenges and turn them into innovative solutions through partnerships and through people.

So when you look at a piece of property or a vacant packing house in Riverside, think of the possibilities. Think of General Brown and Jack Yeager and how they turned undeveloped land into a national cemetery, or a massive freeway interchange that you can see from space.

When you see kids walking to school and when you step into a classroom, you should believe that those students aren't just going to graduate, but also believe that they will change the world. Pam Clute believed in the spirit of partnerships across classrooms and across industries. She believed in the collective impact of our community and that kids who need our help are not just your kids, they are our kids too.

When you drive by the Riverside Art Museum and reflect on its historic roots that began in a dog pound, but now lives in an historic downtown building, you should remember the partnerships that took place between artists and philanthropists to bring that vision to fruition. And that Julia Morgan, the architect of Hearst Castle, has a footprint in our city. Dreams are just dreams without leaders taking action and partners supporting them.

When you see the colorful lights on top of city hall during the Festival, think of Sylvia Martin and the Grier family, who led the way in dedicating their lives to improving race relations and celebrating diversity in the work force, as well as in the community.

When we look at a homeless person, do we see problems to be solved, or do we see a human being? Do we see someone’s son, daughter, brother, sister, mother, father? And so, we must partner with our faith-based institutions and community-based organizations toward a responsible approach to housing our neighbors without homes. We can’t solve homelessness without housing. We all need to support investments into the solutions that have proven to be effective at addressing this issue that affects us all.

So, to remind you about and summarize the information you've just heard, Riverside is open for business in ways you can only dream about. And my office door is always open to you to talk about Riverside's future -- a future that will include many partnerships between public, private and non-profit sectors, educational institutions and research facilities, artists and innovation.

As I look around this room at more than 1,000 interested and interesting people, I can’t help but wonder who will be the next John Benoit, Pam Clute, Sylvia Martin, Jack Yeager and Stan Brown. Who will step up and advocate for our youth, for our diverse populations, for our veterans, for our local interests? Who will develop the next wave of affordable housing units for our kids to move back to Riverside when they are ready to buy a home? Who will tell Congress or the Governor that our region has the most need for doctors and judges and educators?

We need you to step up and find a project where you can volunteer your time, talents, and treasures. Riverside needs you to step out and tell our story of progress and prosperity and desire, to be known as a city that partners in creating innovative solutions for our most pressing public policy issues.

When it rains, it pours! So go out, and make it rain this year. Pour out your love and your hope and your passion, and find some great partners to make it rain, all across this city. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless this great city of Riverside!