

2013 State of the City Address

Mayor Tony Spitaleri

September 7, 2013

Thank you Congressman Honda for that welcome and for joining us today. And welcome to all of you on this beautiful day here at Plaza del Sol.

Years ago, when I first ran for City Council, I emphasized the importance of collaboration and partnership between Community, Business and Government in order for Sunnyvale to grow and evolve successfully.

Standing here today, I can tell you I believe that as firmly now as I did 8 years ago.

Without a doubt, it is that collaboration that has helped Sunnyvale transform throughout its history from its agricultural roots into a city that is recognized both here and abroad as one of the best examples of Silicon Valley's resilience and success.

As you arrived here this morning, you could see some of the physical symbols of that transformation with these two beautiful new mixed-use developments by BRE and Carmel Partners.

These two projects along with others by Prometheus and Summerhill are helping to fulfill the community's vision for Sunnyvale's downtown by building housing and retail near transit, employment, shopping and dining.

As Sunnyvale transforms with smart growth principles it continues to attract businesses and residents who are seeking that desirable combination of a great location, robust economy, and diverse community.

As a result, Sunnyvale's commercial vacancy rate has had one of the strongest turnarounds in the Valley and we just finished another year with near record construction valuations.

The strength and diversity of business here in Sunnyvale is one of the keys to our success because it contributes to a stable economy and enables us to provide excellent services and amenities to our community.

We've had many new businesses choose Sunnyvale this past year – among them Apple, LinkedIn, Google, GoDaddy, Amazon's Lab 126, Tesla, and R&D facilities for Mercedes-Benz and Nissan.

Many others that already call Sunnyvale home are expanding or making improvements to their facilities – Trader Joe’s, Pearson Auto, Nissan, Intuitive Surgical, Bloom Energy, St. Jude, Lockheed Martin ... just to name a few.

In fact, almost everywhere you look, Sunnyvale is transforming to meet the needs of its residents and businesses.

A little ways up the road from here the sparkling new facilities of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation with a Community Cancer Center just opened this summer.

And the related road improvement project at Sunnyvale Avenue, El Camino and Old San Francisco Road is underway to improve access and safety for drivers and pedestrians at those intersections.

We’ve also embarked on extensive road repaving work throughout the city.

The new Swegles Park – built by O’Brien Homes next to the new Fusion townhome development – was just dedicated and named after late Mayor Ron Swegles.

Close on its heels is the new 5.3-acre Seven Seas Park on Morse Avenue which the City will break ground on later this month.

We’re also well-underway with bringing a new branch library to the north end of Sunnyvale.

This new library will make a much needed service vastly more accessible and convenient for many of our residents.

And in what will likely be known as one of the most creative land transactions in our region, the former Onizuka Air Force base has now officially changed hands from the Air Force to the City of Sunnyvale, the Veteran’s Administration and the Foothill-DeAnza Community College District.

The VA will be building their new research offices and moving here from their Palo Alto location.

Foothill-DeAnza is constructing a new higher education center that will offer general education and career training programs for the community and customized training for area employers.

The final piece of this intricate puzzle fell into place this summer.

When two non-profit housing providers transferred their rights to 5-acres of Onizuka over to the City in exchange for a 100-year lease of the Sunnyvale Armory.

Now, the City has a valuable parcel of land at Onizuka and much-needed low-income housing can be built at the Armory site.

It is a true win-win for all involved, but particularly for those most in need of affordable housing here in Sunnyvale.

Of course, we all know that change and growth isn't always easy.

For all of the benefits there are still tough choices to confront, difficult decisions to be made, concerns about traffic, housing, and schools to resolve.

But Sunnyvale must and will continue to approach these with a collaborative and solution-oriented mind-set:

Mathilda/237/101 interchange improvements – already underway with design and environmental work with the VTA to reconstruct the “Monster Interchange”

Peery Park Specific Plan – study type, location and intensity of uses

Lawrence Station Area Plan – maximize transit-oriented development

Apple Campus in Cupertino – partnerships to expand recycled water; ensure traffic and access concerns are addressed

Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara – working with Stadium Authority and City of Santa Clara to ensure traffic, parking and security concerns are addressed

Sunnyvale is a growing dynamic city that is a model for our region as we find ways to adapt to and meet the changing needs of our community.

From complex projects like Onizuka, to innovative ways of providing services like our new book vending machine at the Columbia Neighborhood Center, our success until now – and surely going forward – is in large measure due to our commitment to finding creative and collaborative solutions with our businesses, community and government.