

2012 State of the City Address
Mayor Tony Spitaleri
August 26, 2012

Good morning and welcome.

I was reflecting this morning about my last State of the City address. It was here at the Heritage Park in 2009 and the Museum was celebrating its *first* anniversary.

Today – on the occasion of Sunnyvale's 100th anniversary – I am both honored and humbled to be here again, at this very fitting location, speaking about the state of our great city.

I'm honored because this truly is a unique and certainly once-in-my-lifetime opportunity to be a part of this significant milestone.

I'm humbled because when a city reaches the century mark, it owes its legacy and current state to its employees, residents and community at large.

It is because of their efforts and commitment over the years that Sunnyvale does indeed have a remarkable legacy and is well-positioned today and for its future.

To be honest though, when Martin Murphy Jr. bought property here in 1850, I'm pretty sure he never suspected there would one day be a Match.com, let alone that they would name Sunnyvale the Best Place to Date a Nerd!

Murphy did however exemplify the pioneering and innovative spirit that has helped Sunnyvale continually transform itself over the decades into a center of technology in the heart of Silicon Valley.

While we have certainly been experiencing challenging economic conditions as a result of a global recession, Sunnyvale has weathered them exceptionally well.

As Mayor, I'm often asked how we have done this and why we have remained such a safe and desirable community.

My answer is this – Sunnyvale is a remarkable confluence of a well-run city, a vibrant diverse community, and exceptional businesses that all work in partnership.

Being a well-run city is due in large part to our history of thoughtful, long-range financial planning. For the 22nd year in a row, Sunnyvale has been awarded the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting.

Our budget is balanced and we've restored service levels consistent with our 20-year financial plan. This includes returning tree trimming to a seven year cycle, adding funding for sidewalk repairs, and enhancing our library services to respond to historic levels of use. We are also well underway with several park projects and significant road improvements throughout the city.

We are a full service city that strives to be proactive and responsive to our community's needs and that depends upon strong partnerships. One of the best examples of this is our Neighborhood Enhancement Action Team – or NEAT program – within our Department of Public Safety.

Through NEAT, we work closely with specific neighborhoods to better understand their concerns which we then tackle with a coordinated, multi-department approach that brings lasting solutions.

Another important partnership is with our two school districts. This past spring we completed a joint project with the Sunnyvale School District to expand the Columbia Neighborhood Center. This \$3 million project created the space to serve the community with more recreation, education, health, and social services.

The array of services we offer – from homework help for at-risk youth, to parenting, health and counseling services, to literacy programs, to day trips for our seniors – all reflect not only the range of needs but also the talent and dedication within our community.

Our diverse community reflects many different cultures but shared values bring us together – being a good citizen, working hard, and making life better for the next generation.

Perhaps nowhere is that better reflected than in our schools.

Many people tell me they moved to Sunnyvale because they prioritize education and were drawn to our schools for the caliber of our teachers, the rich programming for our children, and modern well-maintained facilities.

And their contagious passion for education transfers to their children – or as kids say today – it goes viral! Our students continue to excel in state and local test scores. We have award-winners at all levels in music and art, business, math and science, journalism...the list goes on. Many of our students are involved with philanthropic activities here and around the world. And more than 95% of our kids go on to post-secondary education.

Our schools are a microcosm of our City because of this sense of opportunity and drive for achievement.

So too are our businesses.

Finally we're seeing some positive economic indicators. The number of new businesses in Sunnyvale has been on an upward trend the past 5 years. This last year alone, 860 new businesses created over 5,000 new jobs.

Some of those new businesses read like a greatest hits list – LinkedIn, Microsoft, HP, and Google – and they've all expanded into Sunnyvale for the first time. Just as exciting is seeing many of our existing businesses expand here as well – Juniper Networks, Net App, and Intuitive Surgical to name a few.

Our construction numbers look great too – last year our building construction valuation hit a record high and we collected almost double the amount of building revenue from the previous year. Of course these numbers reflect a range of large and small projects, but I want to take a moment to highlight a few starting in the downtown.

I am as anxious as you are to see the Town Center development completed. Unfortunately, that private project remains tangled in lawsuits between the bank that now owns it and a former developer. These lawsuits hold progress hostage, depriving us of new downtown amenities and the much needed revenue they would generate. While this project awaits its day in court, we are doing very well with other aspects of downtown development.

BRE Properties is building Solstice – a mixed-use project north of Washington Avenue that is scheduled to open next year with 38,000 square feet of ground floor retail and 280 apartments.

Right next door at the former Town & Country location, Carmel Partners will break ground this fall to build 8,000 square feet of retail space facing the Plaza del Sol and 133 apartments.

Nokia, Broadcom, and most recently Apple are all now occupying downtown office buildings and taking advantage of the terrific location.

To be sure, some of the most significant attractions downtown are the vibrant shops and restaurants along our Historic Murphy Avenue. Just a short time ago we were celebrating its grand re-opening after months of redevelopment that added new sidewalks, trees, lighting, and archways. These improvements, like those along Sunnyvale Avenue, have really enhanced the gateways to downtown.

I think we can safely say we're now a long way from the original general store on a dirt-lined street!

Beyond downtown we are looking forward to the completion of the new Palo Alto Medical Foundation facilities along Old San Francisco Road which will bring a state-of-the-art Cancer Care Center to our community. And in southern Sunnyvale we have just approved a new 600,000 square foot office complex by JP DiNapoli.

All of this activity certainly supports the latest figures that show our metropolitan area is seeing robust gains in employment. And while I'm extremely happy to see all of this activity and recovery, it doesn't surprise me at all that Sunnyvale is in the heart of it.

I also didn't need Dr. Oz to tell me that Sunnyvale is the Happiest City in America.

Nor did I need Kiplinger to rank us as one of the Top 10 Cities to Raise Kids.

Those accolades simply reaffirm what I've always known about our city, its hard-working employees, its wonderful residents, and its innovative businesses.

One hundred years is a long time.

We owe a great deal of thanks to those who came before us and shaped Sunnyvale into the vibrant, diverse and strong community that it is today.

We owe a great deal of thanks to those of you who are living and working here right now. You are continuing Sunnyvale's long tradition of leadership, hard work and commitment to excellence.

Together, we are ensuring an enviable quality of life and setting the stage for a bright and secure future.

And as we look ahead to the challenges of the next 100 years, we can be confident that those who will be celebrating Sunnyvale's 200th anniversary will be acknowledging all of you.

I'd like to close by recognizing the Historical Society and our many generous sponsors of the Centennial Celebration, as well as all of the City staff, volunteers, and community members who have pulled together to make this an extraordinary weekend.

In particular, Laura Babcock the Director of the Historical Society and former Mayor Melinda Hamilton have led the charge and taken us from concept to reality – thank you so much for your vision and hard work!

All of the festivities – starting with yesterday's outstanding parade through the events this afternoon – are a testament to our community's passion and pride and a grand way to celebrate 100 outstanding years!

Thank you very much.