



Working Together for a Great City
Interim Mayor Todd Gloria
State of the City Address
January 15, 2014

Thank you, Council President Pro Tem Lightner. I am deeply honored by that introduction and proud to call you a colleague and a friend.

Good evening! My fellow Councilmembers, City Attorney and neighbors from throughout the San Diego-Tijuana region, I thank you for being with us here tonight.

More than that, I thank you for being with us for the past year.

Just a few short months ago, I, along with many of you, came to grips with the fact that our city was facing an unprecedented crisis of confidence that would not be easily or quickly resolved. When it became clear that the City Charter would soon dictate a destiny I surely had not contemplated, I identified three critical issues I would need to address immediately in order to get our city back on track.

Number one: Get the machinery of city government functioning again, so our citizens and business owners would have their needs for city services met in a timely, efficient and effective manner.

Number two: Restore confidence in our city and its leaders and remind us why this is such a special place for so many who live here, work here and visit here.

Number three: Rebuild the morale and confidence of the more than 10,000 people who deliver those city services, dedicate themselves to our city and take pride in being a workforce without equal.

Tough challenges, to be sure, but necessary for reaching a place where we could all, once again, be proud to say we are from San Diego.

Before I begin my formal remarks, I would like to acknowledge the people who helped me deliver on those first two objectives: our city employees. I ask all the city employees in the audience tonight to stand and be recognized for your service. Without you, none of the progress we've made would have been possible. Humbly and in particular I would like to thank the members of my staff in my Council Office, the Mayor's Office and the Executive Protection Detail for stepping up and delivering when their city needed them most. You all have my sincerest gratitude.

I'd like to acknowledge my parents, Linda and Phil Gloria, who are in the audience tonight. They taught me the importance of hard work and modeled the values I carry with me today: compassion, integrity and respect. I often share that my parents taught me that if I care about something, I should leave it better than I found it. That has guided me throughout my life, even more strongly since I became your Mayor.

I've tried to approach the responsibility that comes with the Office of the Mayor with one over-riding goal: doing what is best for San Diego. We will leave our city better than we found it.

Working together, we've had some important victories since last we gathered. Together, we celebrated the opening of the San Diego Central Library at Joan and Irwin Jacobs Common, just a few blocks from here.

This library is more than a building to house books. It is an icon that embodies San Diego's commitment to the future.

I'm clearly not the only one who has fallen in love with our new library. Daily attendance has more than doubled, and those who have been there rave about the colorful and playful elevator, the Dr. Seuss-inspired children's area, the three-story glass-encased reading room and the rows and rows of computers providing free public internet access.

After 30 years of trying, how did we finally build this nine-story library? By working together. With the help of our redevelopment agency, a state grant, the San Diego Unified School District, thousands of San Diegans who made individual contributions both large and small and our amazing Library Director Deborah Barrow – we forever changed our skyline and our civic culture.

San Diegans dreamed of a new central library. Public, private and nonprofit sectors worked together to make that dream a reality. That's how it's supposed to work.

The library is a road map for San Diego to follow as we chart our path to the future. Built with unprecedented collaboration, its soaring heights and breathtaking architecture remind us of the need to dream big, and the importance of working hard to accomplish those dreams.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must dream big. San Diego will always be America's Finest City. But we shouldn't be content with just being fine. We must dare to be great.

Tonight, I will lay out the ways that we can continue building upon this work, and what more we can accomplish together.

The foundation for San Diego's greatness has already been laid thanks to our strengthening city finances. We are a national role model for reform and fiscal discipline. With the help of our employee unions, we have implemented landmark retiree health care reform and ratified multi-year labor agreements. Importantly, we've paid our pension bill in full and on time each of the last nine years. Just last month, Standard and Poors upgraded the city's credit rating. This signals to the rest of the world that San Diego's fiscal house is in order. We accomplished this by working together.

Our financial outlook shows that we are on a positive trajectory. However, we must work together to ensure we remain committed to fiscal discipline so that we can tackle urgent concerns like police officer retention and emergency response times. We must prioritize. We must compromise. We must implement voter-approved reforms. We must approve a budget that is balanced financially and fairly so all San Diegans receive the services they need.

A well-run organization is also key to our strong foundation for greatness. I've seen the city function well, and I've seen us grind to a halt. With that experience in mind and through discussions with city employees at all levels, the city's management structure has been reorganized, and an amazing executive team has been appointed to focus on putting San Diego and its citizens first.

This reorganization will ensure that information is shared efficiently and fairly, that decisions are made quickly and in line with our rules and regulations, that the city recognizes and promotes talented employees, and then empowers them to make decisions that are in our city's best interest. Working together, we will keep our focus on you, the citizens.

I could not be more proud of the service of our Chief Operating Officer Scott Chadwick, Assistant Chief Operating Officer Stacey LoMedico, Chief Financial Officer Mary Lewis, Deputy Chief Operating Officers Tony Heinrichs, Jeff Sturak and Ron Villa, our Police Chief William Lansdowne, and our Fire Chief Javier Mainar.

To my fellow Councilmembers, I am so grateful for your unanimous support of my proposals and for putting your trust in this team. Supporting these high caliber professionals in their leadership positions allows us to take our city to the next level.

Our next mayor will be able to benefit from these changes to make our city more responsive, transparent and efficient.

That plan, this team of leaders, our 10,000 employees and our 1.3 million citizens will work together to make us a model of efficiency. Together we will find new ways to cut costs and take the savings and reinvest them in our neighborhoods to reduce emergency response times, improve police officer retention and increase library hours.

With financial strength and organizational efficiency as our foundation, we can build a truly great, world-class city.

The biggest single barrier to achieving greatness is our city's infrastructure. I'm certain I speak for everyone here when I say that San Diego has a problem with crumbling streets and sidewalks and aging sewer and water pipes.

We have at least \$898 million worth of known repair work in our neighborhoods. When you add in other obligations, the total likely exceeds \$2 billion. Despite our improving finances, we don't have \$2 billion. I'm proud of the work this City Council and former

Mayor Jerry Sanders have made to ramp up our infrastructure investments. And I know that's partially because I coined the term "sexy streets."

Last March, the City Council adopted a funding plan of almost \$720 million over the next several years to fix streets and sidewalks

Yesterday, this City Council unanimously approved a \$120 million bond to help us improve our neighborhoods to a level closer to what San Diegans deserve. Repairing streets and storm drains and replacing aging facilities with bond funds is fiscally responsible and community focused.

More than \$43 million in the bond are proposed for street resurfacing. That's a whole lot of sexy streets! Some of the other projects in the bond include the Skyline, San Ysidro and San Carlos Libraries, the Skyline and Home Avenue Fire Stations, and the replacement of Fire Station 22 in Point Loma and Fire Station 5 in Hillcrest. Working together, we can rebuild our neighborhoods.

This bond will make a difference, but a piecemeal approach to an issue this large and this important isn't enough. Given tight financial constraints, competing priorities and our extensive backlog of needs, it's time to think bigger. I will work this year with my Council colleagues, the Independent Budget Analyst and external stakeholders from labor and business on a more aggressive bond program to be placed on the ballot to complete high priority projects that have been delayed for too long and to comprehensively address

our neighborhood needs. Working together, I am confident we can develop a proposal that voters will support in 2016.

Infrastructure is not just a neighborhood issue. It's also an economic competitiveness issue. Well maintained roads and other public facilities help to attract investment and jobs to our city. Strengthening our economy and creating jobs must be a priority as we work together to build a great city.

We demonstrated our ability to grow our local economy with our strong bipartisan coalition to expand the San Diego Convention Center.

The Convention Center expansion will create more than 3,000 construction jobs and 7,000 permanent new jobs. It will generate an additional \$13 million in city tax revenues that we can use for public safety and street repairs. And it will have a total estimated annual economic impact of nearly \$700 million and help us retain ComicCon as a signature San Diego event.

The unanimous vote by the California Coastal Commission – a rare feat for any project but especially noteworthy for one this large – underscores the work we did together to build a strong and community-focused project. It also provides us an example of how we can create consensus to move forward with other important civic projects like a new football stadium.

Speaking of the Chargers, it was exciting to promote San Diego to the 41 million viewers of Sunday's playoff game with a commercial paid for by the Tourism Marketing District. Many of those viewers in cold and wintery places were reminded of all our world-class city has to offer. When they travel here soon, they will help the 160,000 San Diegans that work in our tourism industry.

When those visitors come, they will find that we have outgrown our image as a small Navy town but continue to be a proud military city. We have restored lines of communication in Washington, D.C. to protect San Diego's Navy and Marine Corps installations as the federal government wrestles with its budget challenges. We will make clear that we welcome additional investments in the region that strengthen our national defense, support local businesses, create good jobs and, perhaps most importantly, allow San Diego to benefit from the many servicemembers, veterans and their families who end up calling our city home.

Our strong relationship received a boost just last week when the Secretary of the Navy confirmed that – despite false claims by some – San Diego will remain a key partner in the building and repair of our nation's ships in 2014 and beyond.

Of course, San Diego has a third key economy, and that's innovation. In the year ahead, with the leadership of our Planning Director Bill Fulton, we will launch an Economic Growth Strategy for the city that will provide clear, measurable instruments to attract, retain and grow manufacturing, high-tech, bio-tech and life science companies. It will

expand on our City Council's successful regulatory relief efforts like the sidewalk café ordinance, fee deferrals and other common sense measures that are creating more jobs. Coupled with a renewed emphasis on community plan updates and working together with Civic San Diego in neighborhoods like Encanto and City Heights, we will see incredible progress bringing economic vitality to every corner of San Diego.

Our local economy is only truly strong if it works for all San Diegans. The high cost of living, coupled with growing income inequality, is a threat to our ability to build a great city. San Diego must not be divided between the very wealthy and the very poor. A great city must have a vibrant and growing middle class. That is why I believe it is time support an increased minimum wage for San Diego.

No one who works full-time should live in poverty. According to the Center on Policy Initiatives, 28% of full-time, year-round employees earned less than the \$30,000 which is what is needed to live self-sufficiently in San Diego. A full-time minimum wage job in San Diego pays about half that amount. Although California's minimum wage is scheduled to increase in 2016, that translates into an annual salary of less than \$21,000, which is simply not enough in a city with a high a cost of living like ours.

The Economic Policy Institute and other experts state that raising the minimum wage will stimulate the economy and benefit taxpayers. Lower-income workers are more likely to spend their additional wages on basics like food, housing and transportation. That's good for businesses. It's good for San Diego. And it's good for all of us.

Minimum wage earners would also rely less on public assistance to meet their most basic needs. In recent months, we have vigorously debated the most effective way to provide affordable housing to our low-income citizens. Let's reduce the need for subsidized housing. Let's start paying people enough to be able to afford the rents and mortgages in our city.

The City Council should place a measure to raise the minimum wage before the voters this November. Working together we can and we must do this.

We have already used this collaborative approach to tackle a pressing poverty issue: homelessness. There is more momentum on homelessness issues in San Diego than ever before. More and more players, from the business community and service providers, to the public and private sectors, are actively engaged now – putting focus and resources toward ending homelessness.

This past year, working together has generated tangible results.

We opened Connections Housing. A year-round facility focusing on permanent supportive housing, it is not only saving lives, but is creating long term cost savings and allowing us to utilize our limited resources more effectively.

I've continued to work with the Housing Commission, the Downtown San Diego Partnership, the Campaign to End Homelessness and homeless service providers to get people off the streets and into permanent housing. The Campaign's pilot programs successfully provided 225 vouchers for Permanent Supportive Housing for street homeless persons in the Downtown area, implementing national best practices to get and keep people off the streets. Complementing these efforts is the Downtown Partnership's Work Your Way Home Program, which reunited 146 homeless individuals with their families and support systems in 2013. These programs are a great story, but we're not done.

Too often, when looking at challenges as complex as homelessness, people are tempted to throw their hands up and throw in the towel. We will not be doing that. We are San Diego. We're a big city. We're a great city. And we cannot be America's Finest City with thousands of our neighbors living on our streets.

That's why I am committed to bringing forward a package to be included in the next city budget that better utilizes the money spent from the city's General Fund for homeless services.

This continued commitment of approximately \$1.9 million will expand homeless programs that we know are working, like the Homeless Outreach Team, the Serial Inebriate Program, the Check-In Center and the Neil Good Day Center.

My plan also includes an investment for an enhanced winter shelter program that would enable shelter operators to improve assessment and case management services, so we can end the cycle of homelessness for more of our neighbors while the shelters are open.

In addition, the city will provide funding to support the Regional Continuum of Care's creation of a coordinated intake and assessment system, for use by all organizations throughout the region that provide homeless services. This is currently an unfunded federal mandate, and it is a critical step in delivering coordinated and efficient services to the homeless. Furthermore, investing in this system is essential to bringing nearly \$16 million in annual federal funds to the City and County of San Diego.

This package of solution-oriented program enhancements will allow us to do more with the money we are already spending on the homeless. Working together, we will meet my goal of ending homelessness in Downtown by 2016, and when we do, we will replicate effective programs throughout our city.

A great city is one that is not just economically strong and has sexy streets, but is also healthy, with a healthy environment and healthy people. No one doubts that San Diego is beautiful, with perfect weather and stunning beaches and bays, parks, canyons and other geographical wonders. We cannot take these blessings for granted.

We're already implementing sustainable solutions for San Diego. To date, we generate 25 megawatts in renewable energy sources. We upgraded 90% of our traffic lights to LED

and installed 34,000 new efficient street lights, saving taxpayers millions of dollars. We've launched 30 energy retrofit projects in 15 buildings in Balboa Park, which combined with previous work, is saving the city \$1 million. But we must do more.

Let the word go out from this theatre tonight that San Diego will be a global leader in addressing the challenge of climate change. We will work together with partners like CleanTECH San Diego and UC San Diego to pioneer new technologies and strategies that will protect our environment and then export them to other cities that share our sustainable vision.

The cornerstone of our environmental health strategy is the Climate Action Plan which will protect public health and put us on a path to a clean energy future with safe, vibrant and livable neighborhoods.

With five key strategies, the Climate Action Plan comprehensively addresses major environmental factors like Energy and Water Conservation, Local Clean Energy Generation, Waste Reduction, Improved Transportation and Climate Resiliency.

As a city blessed with abundant sunshine, it makes sense to tap into this natural source of energy. We are leading by example with our own city buildings, where we recently approved one megawatt of solar energy at two city properties, and we're looking at installing more solar resources at all sites where it is appropriate.

We will also make it easier for San Diego homeowners to install solar panels on their homes when the city implements a residential PACE financing program later this year. Our target is to increase the use of renewables until we power all homes and businesses in the city with 100% clean energy resources by the year 2035.

Last month the Council adopted a Zero Waste Initiative that sets an ambitious goal of diverting all waste from city landfills by 2040 through conservation, recycling and composting. This year the City Council will act to reduce the wasteful practice of single-use plastic bags and their harmful impacts on the environment and marine life.

We must also prepare our city for the impacts of a warming climate. Experts tell us that San Diego's water supply is likely to be severely challenged. We need a more cost-effective and diverse water supply. One solution we are working on, under the leadership of our Public Utilities Director Halla Razak, is to divert flow from the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Facility and treat it for potable water reuse. This would create a new local water supply while also ensuring our wastewater treatment system protects the ocean environment.

Make no mistake; none of this will be easy. Nothing worth doing ever is. This is part of our effort to leave this place better than we found it, and it's an effort worth making.

Critical to successfully tackling our environmental and infrastructure challenges is integrating a new transportation vision for our region. As the chair of the San Diego

Association of Governments' Transportation Committee, there are three projects that we must push forward that are key to creating a great city.

First, working together with SANDAG, the Metropolitan Transit System and County Supervisor Ron Roberts, we will make significant progress this year on extending the trolley from Old Town to University Towne Centre. This \$1.7 billion project will link central San Diego, South Bay and East County to the Golden Triangle jobs center, UCSD and the VA Medical Center. We will be pushing in Washington for the full funding agreement needed to construct this important expansion to our local mass transit network.

Second, while we advocate for the Mid Coast Trolley Extension in Washington, we will not forget about the urgent need to improve the U.S. side of the San Ysidro Port of Entry. Doing so will improve border wait times, which are disruptive to cross-border commerce and impair our efforts to strengthen ties between San Diego and Baja California.

Thanks to the united lobbying efforts by the City of San Diego and the City of Tijuana, with support from our state and federal elected delegations, I am pleased that \$226 million for Phase 3 of the project should be finalized this week. This important funding will construct the realignment of a portion of Interstate 5 to connect to Mexico's El Chaparral facility which opened over a year ago. Thank you to my friends, Tijuana Mayor Jorge Astiazaran and former Mayor Carlos Bustamante, for standing with us to demand completion of the project so we can take advantage of the full potential of our unique binational region.

Finally, San Diego's transportation future demands that we become a world-class bike city.

Fifty miles of roadway were restriped last year to accommodate wider bike lanes. Green bike lanes have been installed at numerous intersections and hundreds of shared lane markers have been placed around the city. Next month, we will eliminate traffic lanes on two local streets to create safer bikeways. Yes, we have begun eliminating car traffic lanes for bike lanes in southern California. We're doing it by working together.

Later this year, our bike sharing program will kick off with the phased installation of 185 stations around the city. This partnership with DecoBike will not only expand bicycle access to more San Diegans, but will improve the connectivity of our bike, pedestrian and public transit systems.

Our updated Bicycle Master Plan and the \$200 million approved by SANDAG late last year mean bigger and better advancements in this area. Pedaling makes sense for public health, our environment, reducing traffic congestion and for greater interaction in our neighborhoods.

Our vision is for San Diegans to be connected by a transportation network with robust pedestrian, bicycle, car and transit options. Our streets are not just for cars. They're for

people. And when they are designed and function as the public spaces they should be, everyone benefits.

We've covered a lot of ground tonight. Some might think that it is impossible to accomplish the objectives I've outlined. That the challenges are too great. That the goals are too ambitious. That the resources are too small. But that isn't San Diego. We dare to be great and when we do, we have succeeded beyond our wildest dreams.

Picture San Diego in 1915. Although we were a small city of just 40,000 people, San Diegans had the foresight to invest in their future by inviting the world to experience the beauty, the resources and the promise of our remarkable region. Three million people accepted that invitation and made the 1915 Panama-California International Exposition a huge success. One hundred years later, we are the beneficiaries of that work. It gave us our city's Crown Jewel, Balboa Park, and it was a catalyst for a century of remarkable economic growth and prosperity.

As we near the 2015 centennial of the Exposition, more investments are being made in Balboa Park. We've completed the pedestrian enhancements at the Plaza de Panama, launched the new tram service and are currently underway with upgrades and improvements to many of the historic buildings in the core of the park. We're working with Caltrans on a complete retrofit of the iconic Cabrillo Bridge. And we'll soon be constructing additional accessibility improvements to ensure everyone can access and enjoy the Park.

2015 will be another year of greatness in the Park. San Diegans are coming together to produce an event that will highlight our innovation, showcase the breadth of our diversity, engage our minds and inspire our children. In addition to the exciting exhibits being planned for the cultural institutions, Balboa Park will sparkle with lights, festivals and forums throughout the year.

In 2015, our generation has its own opportunity to tell the San Diego story to every corner of the globe. Let the story we tell be one of a city that was not content with just being fine. Let's tell the story of a city that challenged itself to be great. Let's not be a city that follows, but a city that leads. Let's show the world a city that worked together to lay a strong foundation and built upon it economic prosperity, equality of opportunity and environmental leadership for others to follow in the 21st century.

The people of San Diego have set a clear agenda: you want a stronger economy, better jobs, excellent public schools in every neighborhood and a government that respects and is respected by its citizens.

San Diegans aren't looking for miracles. You're looking for responsible, responsive leaders focused on providing basic public services effectively and efficiently. You want us to work together to solve problems. We hear you. And we have only just begun to provide the kind of government you deserve.

Ladies and gentlemen, the state of our city is strong and in the year ahead we will work together to make it even stronger.

In closing, I want tell you what a privilege it has been serving you as your Mayor. As a Native American, Filipino, Puerto Rican, Dutch, gay guy, and the son of a hotel maid and a gardener, it is fair to say this was not an expected experience. It was one I took with a sincere commitment and a heavy heart. So, on a personal note, I'd like to leave you tonight with this thought. It reflects how I feel and the honor it is to serve.

Helen Keller said, "I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty to accomplish small tasks as if they were great and noble."

On behalf of my fellow City Councilmembers, our City Attorney and as your Mayor, I thank you for all you've done, and will continue to do, as we work together in 2014. And I thank you for allowing me to lead in both the large and small tasks as if they were all great and noble.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless our great City of San Diego.