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2020 State of the City Address

Welcome and thank you for being here this afternoon. I am happy to see so many people who want to be engaged and involved in what's happening in the City of Eagle.

Individuals and businesses who care about what's happening on their street, in their neighborhood, and at city hall are the backbone of this community. So, thank you for taking the time to hear me speak today.

Thank you to the members of the Eagle chamber of commerce, our partners in this event, and Susan and Foad Roghani for the beautiful venue.

Also, we have several officials from neighbor cities and government agencies- thank you for taking the time to be here and learn about Eagle.

I would also like to thank the generous businesses who donated to the 2020 Eagle Youth Scholarship Fund. The fund helps support High School Seniors in Eagle who plan to go on to a college education in the arts or trade school programs.

Our Gold level donor is High Desert Hardwood

Our Silver level donors are Downs Realty and Auction, Family Pool and Spa, Mountain West Bank, and Idaho Power.

And our Bronze level donor is Rennison Companies.

Thank you all for supporting this program and the next generation of our community.

A little bit about me for those of you who don't know me yet.

I moved to Eagle in 2003 with my wife, Jennifer, we just celebrated 25 years of marriage and our two children, Brandon who will be 23 this year and Brianna who will be 21. I want to thank them for all the support, encouragement, and understanding over the years.

For the last 16 years, I've had the privilege to serve the Eagle Kiwanis, the Landing Community Center, Eagle Chamber of Commerce, Eagle High Baseball, West Valley Little League, and act as a host family for the Boise Hawks.

I've also served on Eagle's Parks and Pathways Committee, Eagle Planning and Zoning Commission, Eagle Urban Renewal Agency, and Eagle City Council.

Service Recognitions:

Service organizations and non-profits have played a big role in my life and play a big role in our community. I would like to take a moment to recognize some of the organizations whose members make such a difference in our community including:

The Eagle Kiwanis Club whose motto is “Serving the Children of the World”

The Eagle616 Lions Club whose motto is “Together we Serve”

The Rotary Club of Eagle and Garden City, whose motto is “Service Above Self”

The Eagle Toastmasters whose motto is “Integrity, Respect, Service, Excellence”

The American Legion Orville Jackson Post 127- the local chapter of America's largest veterans service organization.

And one of our newest organizations- is the Sunshine for Claire Pediatric Cancer Foundation, which was started in honor of Claire, a local girl gone too soon due to childhood cancer by her mother Annie Elliot.

Her legacy lives on through her loved ones and this foundation which is hosting their Inaugural “Gold Run- Shine for a Cure” which will be held at Reid Merrill Park on May 9th. The goal of the event is to raise awareness about childhood cancers and provide funds to other treasure valley families and kids who are fighting cancer.

I just want to reflect on all the value these organizations and their members bring to our community and thank them for their service. I hope this inspires you to get involved in some way if you haven’t already.

Now you all may be wondering- with a new mayor, what’s in store? What does the future look like for Eagle?

My biggest goal- is for Eagle to continue to be the Gem of the Treasure Valley. That means protecting and enhancing the things about this community that we already love - like-

Working to keep downtown Eagle a walkable and family-friendly place while attracting more restaurants and shops.

Developing the empty lots at the corner of Eagle Road and State Street with office spaces, shops and restaurants.

Another thing in the works- which I think this business savvy crowd will appreciate- is making Eagle more business friendly.

Eagle has high design and building standards- which in the past has made it more challenging for business owners.

Now- those design standards are very important to me, and to many of you and they make Eagle stand out from “Anyplace, USA.”

So, we are working to find ways to streamline the process without compromising on those values. The end goal- prosperous businesses that don't look out of place with the rest of our beautiful community.

Now a peek behind the curtain at what's been going on in our City departments for the last year- and what we can look forward to in 2020.

Did you know that the Eagle Parks and Recreation department is just 6 years old? Parks and Rec is responsible for some of our most popular events and programs- and to think they have achieved so much in just a few years.

In 2019 the department saw a 71 percent increase in class offerings and 54% increase in total participation from the previous year. It was the first year for the Eagle Youth Soccer League and over 150-thousand people attended city special events like Harvest Fest, Eagle Country Christmas and the Eagle Saturday Market which will start in May.

Parks and Rec is the main organizer of Eagle Fun Days. For next year 2021 there will be some changes- but it is nothing to worry about. We will be looking at moving the fireworks display to Eagle Island State Park- and bringing back the Rocky Mountain Oyster Feed in time for Eagle Fun Days ~~the~~ 50th year anniversary.

My vision to foster continued success and expansion of these programs with minimal burden on the Eagle taxpayers is to increase opportunities for companies to get involved in the community and sponsor these beloved programs. Right now, our Parks and Recreation Department recapture rate is 20 percent, through sponsorship opportunities, I have challenged our director to recapture 80 percent of the departments expenses within 4 years.

There has been a lot of talk about the Eagle Landing Community Center and I just want to make clear that I believe we need a Community Center. Because of the success with our Parks and Recreation department I want to find long term solutions to Eagle's Community Center needs. We are looking to expand city hall and create a permanent community center, meeting space and place for our employees to work comfortably. We can do this for about the same amount of money we have budgeted for the Landing and have so much more.

West ADA School district is also looking to rebuild Eagle Elementary School Of The Arts – on the upper campus off Eagle Road and is wanting to work with us to use the gym, classrooms and playground area at the bottom campus for our Parks and Recreation department in the future. I want to have a community center that works for Eagle residents for 40 plus years not just 5 or 10.

And don't think I have forgotten about our Historical Museum. My wife and I have both spent many hours volunteering for the museum over the years and know how important it is to the community. My vision would be to see the old Catholic Church from the Landing location picked up and moved over by City Hall- much the same way historic homes were moved during the St. Luke's expansion in downtown Boise. Moving the church would mean that city hall, the Eagle Public Library, the community center and the Eagle Museum of history and preservation would be on the same campus- creating a true City Civic Center.

If you live in Eagle, at least part of the reason is probably because you love the outdoors and the trails. In December of 2019 an updated inventory concludes that there are 31-miles of public access trails within the Eagle city limits – 8.6 of which are not maintained by City funds. In October of 2019 COMPASS released traffic counts for Eagle’s North Channel Greenbelt which reflected a monthly trend average of over 15-thousand per month and over 180-thousand for the year at just one single point near Reid Merrill Park. This trend represents an increase in use of over 11% in one year.

The connectivity of the Eagle Trails System continues to improve. In 2019 a new trail connected the Lakemoor development to Chinden boulevard and provided a low stress alternative to navigating the Eagle Road to access the Greenbelt.

Since early last year our trails department has been in talks with Ada County Parks and Waterways, ACHD and ITD, to begin planning future bicycle and pedestrian connections to Eagle through Dry Creek Subdivision. This would give Eagle trail users access to trails to Avimor, Hidden Springs, and the Ridge to Rivers Trail System.

Our trails department continues to pursue connecting the Eagle Trail System to Eagle Island State Park. Easements required for connection to the Park were granted by Mace River Ranch and one private homeowner in Mace River Ranch that will make greenbelt rerouting possible. These easements were granted to the City at no cost. The city has also secured a grant to begin construction. So, one day soon you will be able to travel from Lucky Peak State Park in the East, to Eagle Island State Park in the west without ever leaving a greenbelt trail.

And just this month, repairs to the three most-damaged riverbank sections in the flooding of 2017 have been reclaimed and improved using FEMA funds that saved the City over 250-thousand dollars and relieves concerns about these areas sustaining further damage this spring.

The Eagle Arts Commission continues to enhance the cultural and artistic atmosphere of our city. Some projects we are very excited for in the future are a call for street artists for a mural along the pedestrian underpass under Eagle Road and a new photography project called “83616 Works” all about people working in Eagle.

Did you know there were over a quarter of a million visitors to the Eagle Public Library during the last fiscal year? And people checked out over half a million books. Coming up in 2020 The Eagle Public Library will become a certified Family Place Library. Family Place Libraries are a nationwide network of libraries who embrace the fact that literacy begins at birth, and that libraries can help build healthy communities by nourishing healthy families. Also Launching this year will be a 501c3 non-profit foundation to help the Library take financial donations from businesses and residents to support their future needs. Please check out our library - it is just not about books anymore from baking pans to music and even WIFI hotspots.

The City of Eagle Building department issued 462 new home building permits last year, along with 31 commercial and 28 multi-family permits. The City of Eagle Building Department is continuing to research on better technology to make things more efficient and to better serve Eagle Residents.

On the Economic Development front: Eagle saw 1-point-3 billion dollars (that's right, I said billion) in private sector investment last year, with over 52-million in new business investment. Over 60 new businesses came to Eagle in 2019 and the community added over 360 new jobs.

Some community staples and local entrepreneurs have business expansions in the works.

Finer Frames, a national award-winning frame shop, that started in 1999, expanded their location on East State Street in downtown Eagle. The expansion included the remodel of an existing building with new site landscaping, parking, updated facade, covered patio and vinyl fence. I would suggest you go by and say hi to Meg who puts a lot of time and effort into our downtown.

Tates Rents expanded their presence within Eagle with a remodel of an existing building off East State Street.

Lamb Weston added 44 employees to their Eagle office ~~in 2019~~. Their total workforce in Eagle that serves their global headquarters is 204.

Intuit is starting to build a second building that will nearly double its employee count in Eagle. The second building will be adjacent to their current building location on East Colchester Drive. Intuit added 110 new jobs and is projected to add an additional 50-60 in 2020. Intuit currently has a total of 480 employees and plans to increase their workforce to 900.

PetIQ announced it will expand its presence in Eagle with a new 55-thousand square foot building. The building features a rooftop deck, a cafeteria, on-site gym and outdoor plazas. PetIQ publicly trades on NASDAQ and owns several pet-focused brands, including VetIQ, PetAction and Betsy Farms. The capital investment will be approximately 20-Million dollars. The office expansion in Eagle will be their corporate headquarters location. They added over 20 employees in 2019 and are currently at 70. They are looking to add another 40 this year and as many as 280 in the future.

Also, in the realm of Economic Development and marketing, The City of Eagle is in the beginning stages of a branding initiative.

You might be thinking: Why do we need that? Are you trying to force a change in this community or force it to pretend its something its not? I want to assure you- that's not what's happening at all.

We all know why we live here and what we love about this place- the highest quality of life in the area, unmatched access to the outdoors, rustic charm with ready access to amenities, and a friendly small-town atmosphere. All of you contribute to Eagles' personality and identity.

Branding is a way to solidify those values and unique qualities and make them unmistakable to anyone who comes to our city.

The Eagle Public Works Department are the unsung heroes of much of the day to day operations of the city. They keep city hall, our parks and all our facilities clean and in good working order.

To put that into perspective, they completed nearly 5-thousand work orders last year.

The folks in the Public Works department are at all the parks every morning, an hour before sunrise, 7 day a week to make sure they are clean, and safe and ready for you to use.

In the spirit of safety- the city of Eagle has also done some security updates to our facilities, including more cameras in library, and in the city hall parking lot.

We have also installed security cameras at the Ada/Eagle Sports Complex to make sure the facility is a safe place for you to take your families.

This brings the sports complex up to the same security standards as at Merrill and Guerber Parks. Yes, they have cameras as well, so don't try anything!

Public Works has also undertaken some projects that are saving the city a lot of money.

After the switch to LED bulbs and more efficient HVAC systems, Eagle City Hall and the Eagle Public Library are on track to save the city and the taxpayers thousands of dollars per year.

The Public works department is also economizing its vehicles, by replacing old larger trucks with more fuel-efficient compact trucks.

Work will resume on the Merrill Park Splash Pad and Playground as soon as the weather warms up. We estimate that the park will be "play-ready" by Memorial Day weekend, at which point you and your families will be able to enjoy the new play structure, swings, A.D.A. accessible equipment, and the 60-percent bigger splash pad!

Public works will also be sprucing up Heritage Park this spring. The Gazebo will be getting a fresh coat of paint in April, just in time for the opening of the Saturday Market in May.

The City of Eagle Water Department has grown its network from Horseshoe Bend Road all the way to Highway 16 and from the north channel of the Boise River all the way to Beacon Light Road.

Now we don't service all the City as Eagle has three water companies, The City of Eagle Water, Eagle Water, and SUEZ.

One of the unique things about The City of Eagle's water system is that because it wasn't started until the early 1990s, we have no lead components to the system.

Last year the department completed a major renovation of the system's oldest well in Lexington Hills and added a new well and pump house at Palmer lane.

Soon the City will be extending its 16-inch trunk-line from Lanewood to Beacon Light and 1000 feet East along Beacon Light.

This is part of the water department's long-term master plan and means there will be plenty of water to handle future development with the eventual goal of adding an underground reservoir.

The Eagle Police Department has been an important collaboration with the Ada County Sheriff's office that we have had since 1996. This year we welcomed a new Chief - Matt Clifford. He has had some big shoes to fill with the retirement of Chief Patrick Calley and is doing an incredible

job. The City of Eagle Police is staffed with a police chief, two sergeants, eight patrol officers, two detectives, two code enforcement officers and one administrative staff member.

Eagle Police officers can call on fellow Ada County Sheriff's deputies working outside of Eagle for assistance when necessary. The partnership between the City of Eagle and the Ada County sheriff's Office means the City has access to all of the County's law enforcement resources without the administrative costs of running a fully independent police department.

The Eagle City clerk's office is the glue that holds the whole operation together. The clerk's office also has the often thankless- but so important- task of paying the bills and the employees.

They are the people you go to for all kinds of things- whether you need to license your business or your dog.

Last year they issued 549 Commercial business licenses, 130 home occupations, and 765 dog licenses.

Sharon Bergmann our City Clerk and Treasure since 1996 will be celebrating 24 years with us in May and was planning to retire but after I was elected agreed to stay until at least the end of my first term. She has been such an important part of our City and a constant throughout the years.

I also want to thank the City of Eagle IT department, without them none of the other departments would be able to do their jobs, Planning and Zoning, who make sure elected officials and resident's visions are implemented and carried out, Ellen our Information officer who makes sure we stay in contact with our residents through the City website, social media and more, and all the other employees who make this such a wonderful community.

I would also like to recognize the Eagle Fire Department and the Eagle Sewer District.

The next 4 years are going to be full of hard work and I wouldn't have it any other way. You, the people of Eagle have trusted me with something so important, the stewardship of our shared home.

I am so excited to work together with all of you keep Eagle the gem of the treasure valley. Thank you for coming out tonight.