

# 2020 State of the City Address

By Mayor Brent K. Marshall

Honorable City Council, staff members, employee's, citizens and guests, it is my distinct honor and great privilege this evening to report to you. Tonight we celebrate our accomplishments of the past year. 2019 was an awesome year. It has been a year of change and challenge in our community. You know it feels like we are six months into the new year and when I look at the calendar, it's only February. As we look back it reveals some of the important accomplishments for the future of our residents. I wish to highlight some of our major projects.

The Main Street project, updating our water and sewer infrastructure, was a large project. Both water and sewer were in critical need of improvements. As city leaders, we were committed to making these improvements now to take care of our current needs and prepare for our future. As you are aware, this was a ten-million-dollar investment in our infrastructure. Not an easy task, as the infrastructure is under the road. Construction was very disruptive and caused road damage and traffic problems. We wondered how we could get where we needed to go, as well as being on a rough road. Sometimes we drove down the wrong side of the road and yes, at times, driving down Main Street was more confusing than math homework. But through all this construction, we did get a new Main Street and a paved Matthews Lane. We still have some streets that need to be addressed as soon as the weather will allow. Being a growing city isn't easy. The city will continue to invest in roads to improve transportation and safety in our city. Whitaker Construction still has some landscaping and punch list items that have not been completed. We have been in contact with them and they are eager to complete this project. They will bring a crew back to finish, as soon as the weather allows.

Our parks across the city are getting better thanks to a "we can" attitude. Being the first for our area, we have a dog park, a fenced in area with amenities for dogs at the Old Lincoln Highway Park. This park is also getting a new restroom and new playground equipment. Cherry Street Park was remodeled with a new rubberized pour-in-place fall protection surfacing around the playground equipment, another first for our area. Improvements were made to the baseball fields with new aluminum bleachers and a new playground at the tot park. Hollywood Park also has a first for our area, a shade cover of sails, protecting our children from the sun and making sure the playground equipment doesn't get too hot.

We received two grants for sidewalks on Durfee Street. The first grant was for a sidewalk going from Center Street to Cooley Street. This has been a process but we have finally met all of the criteria for this project and the contract should be awarded shortly. The other sidewalk project on Durfee Street was from Quirk Street to Willow street. That project is complete. It is heart warming to see them being used and keeping pedestrians off the street and safe. We have applied for more sidewalk grants for this upcoming year.

Our North Well project was completed this year. Water quality is essential for the health of our residents. The water quality in this well is pristine and is now currently serving our residents.

In November of last year, the lawsuit between Grantsville and Tooele County ended with a settlement agreement and a willingness to resolve issues by working together.

The year-long project of updating our General Plan was approved by the City Council. It provides a guide for the future of the community. This was a big project. We appreciate the comments that were received from the residents in all of the public meetings.

Our 4th of July last year was spectacular. I wish to thank the many volunteers who make this great celebration what it is. It could not happen without them. Grantsville is fortunate to have volunteers that are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and get to work. They contribute their time and serve on committees that make Grantsville a great place to live.

At the start of this year, 2020, we had what was the most profound low in our community in a long time. We experienced a significant tragedy. Nothing can prepare a community for a tragedy of this magnitude. This was the most painful experience of my life in public service. However, it demonstrated the remarkable ability of a community to come together. I venture to say it may be the one event that never leaves my memory. But we learned there is goodness that rises from the ashes of pain. I have never before seen this much outpouring of kindness and generosity. The Haynie family was a part of our community. Their memorial was overflowing in the chapel. A great tribute to the family. This demonstrates that our community is a portrait of who we are.

There are other acknowledgments to be made here as well. The support and outpouring that our law enforcement has received, and the other responding agencies have received. It was amazing, as well as the professionalism and manner in which this investigation was conducted. We are grateful to you, Chief Enslin, for your outstanding leadership and all the police officers that protect our community. We appreciate your service. Thank you.

Our Fire Department is also part of our public safety. It is a fundamental service that a city provides. We as residents are grateful to the volunteers of this department. We appreciate the talent and dedication of these men and women responding, protecting and serving our community. Thank you, Chief Critchlow, and all of the volunteer firefighters.

The Public Works Department provide, and are responsible for, many services in our city. Nothing gets done without a dedicated team of individuals who go out and make it happen. This is the heart beat of the city. Providing services that make our quality of life, one of the reasons we call this community home. The building of the Public Works Department caught on fire last fall and they have been working out of a portable office. Plans are in process to get a new office for them. Thank you, James Waltz, and your crew for all they do for our community.

The state of our city is financially sound. Once again, the independent audit showed our finances are in order. Seven years in a row with no findings. This is a team effort, but one that is essential in how and when we spend your tax dollars. We will continue to plan our projects with the available funds. The auditors praised our city for its good management of city finances. Congratulations to Sherrie Broadbent, our Finance Director, and her team. This is why our city finances are solid.

I am especially thankful for our outstanding team of staff and employees who work together. They are dedicated and have a great work ethic, always striving for excellence. This is one of the reasons for all our successes. I wish to be able to express my appreciation to each of them for their support each day. Our success, in part, is due to them. Our employees are empowered to find ways to achieve goals, all while improving the quality of life for our residents. This is what makes Grantsville a model city. Thank you, city employees.

To our City Council. We are fortunate to have these success stories. Each year is an achievement. What each of them have in common is hard work, vision, sacrifice, and dedication. Thank you.

The success of our city was built by the vision and sacrifices of many. We have accomplished a lot of big things in the past ten years and there are bigger plans for the future.

We continue to work to attract new economic growth, while remaining committed to the safety and quality of life for our citizens. We have been successful in attracting some new businesses to our community. Some new construction has already started, with some finishing the process to get ready to begin construction.

There is work to do and we are not slowing down. We have grown from past experiences. We have the greatest minds working together to accommodate for future growth and development. Sometimes government makes the easy things look hard, but I'd like to think that over the past decade, we have made some of the hard things look a little easier.

We cannot stress how important this year's Census will be for all of us. We were one of the lowest reporting counties in the state in 2010. We are taking steps to educate and inform our residents to be counted this year. It's hopeful that when your census form arrives, you view this as a chance to help your community get funding. This census helps determine funding for things like schools, roads, highway construction, economic development and more.

I want to recognize the most important people in my life: my sweetheart and bride of 45 years, Corene; my sons, Ryan and Colin and their families; my mother, Ruth and Jack; my siblings and their families; Corene's mother and father, Delores and Marlow; and Corene's siblings and their families. They are my greatest joy. Family is a circle of strength, love, and hope. I am very blessed. Balancing life is a bit complicated at times. Let us take a moment to appreciate the time we have. My thanks and appreciation to you for being part of me.

I am honored and humbled to stand before you today as Mayor of my hometown. 2020 is the start of not only a new year, but also a new decade. New opportunities are before us; the opportunity to improve, to set new bench marks, and as we do, this will continue to be a model for exceptional success. The state of our city is strong and Grantsville's future is bright.

God bless you, God bless America, and God bless the city of Grantsville. Thank you.