

2021 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. I am honored to let you know that the state of our City is stronger than ever. Our City is focused, and the innovative spirit of our community will continue to prevail. 2020 was a challenging year and while this past year has been difficult, we still have had successes and look forward to 2021. Our past year has been defined with heartbreaking events, but there is finally an end in sight. We have the opportunity to keep our families and friends safe and healthy as we hopefully enter into the closing chapter of this pandemic. Our reward will be, gathering as family and friends safely, in our favorite places. Yes, this past year had many lessons, as well as blessings. The blessings, due to difficulties, were a little harder to see; but we have received many.

The earthquake, outside of Magna, was felt all over the valley. There was damage throughout the valley and yes, it was scary. While it only lasted a short time, many thoughts rushed through our heads. We checked all of our infrastructure and we were fortunate the damage in our community was minimal; with some minor water leaks and minor cracking on some buildings.

Our community has not been immune to the effects of COVID-19 and this global pandemic. This virus has changed our lives. Events were cancelled. We made tough decisions to cancel the 4th of July, our biggest event. The discussions were always about the safety of our citizens and community. Cancelling public events is always a disappointment. Our conversations were long and tedious, but always about the well-being of our community. We are in the early stages of planning some type of a 4th of July celebration. It will be different than events in the past, but a celebration none-the-less for our community.

This pandemic has also affected many of our small businesses. The City applied for the "Cares Act Relief Funds" and was able to provide grant money to our small businesses to help them with added expenses and lost revenue. We all need to support our local businesses, especially at this time. They are the backbone of our community, providing goods and essential services.

As we look to the New Year, we realize we have survived many challenges, and have thrived. The truth is, we learn a lot when people are in a crisis. We learn even more about our communities. When resourceful communities come together, and work together, and have similar goals; great things happen. We witnessed this happen numerous times, making face masks to protect others is one example. Another example is how much Grantsville City accomplished last year.

Our new General Plan was approved last year. There were many public comments received from the public meetings. Comments were infused into the plan. This project took approximately a year and a half. Not a simple process. The General Plan is now in use with the Planning Commission and City Council.

We finally completed the sidewalk grant going from Center Street to Cooley Street on Durfee Street. We have been awarded two more sidewalk grants. They are in the engineering phase currently.

The first sidewalk will be on Quirk Street, going to Pear Street from Durfee Street. The second sidewalk project is on Durfee Street going east from Willow Street to the LDS church. This connectivity will give pedestrians a safe walkable mode to move through the community.

Another grant we have been awarded is for a Park-n-Ride. This will be completed in two phases. The location is just west of Lambs Lane off Highway 138. This project is also in the engineering phase. This park-n-ride will also serve as a collection point for U.T.A ridership.

The City has a new City logo and Website. We had a contest for the city logo. There were many who submitted their design for the logo. The City Council was the final judge, selecting the logo that depicts the Deseret Peak area. The website will be coming online in the very near future with a new look and user friendly tabs. The website will be able to be updated in house to provide current information to citizens.

The North Cemetery was recently opened, making available burial plots to be purchased by citizens. Sales have been brisk. Many residents appreciate the opportunity to be able to purchase family plots. This has been in progress for a considerable time.

The engineering needs of the city has, in the past, been fulfilled by a contracted engineering firm. The City has now hired its own engineer, saving tax payer money because it costs less than the contracted engineer. It has also helped having an in-house engineer to be able to respond to issues in our community, providing oversight, guidance, and reviewing subdivision plans with Planning and Zoning. Timm Dixon is our City Engineer. He has become a vital individual to the City's team.

The new Public Works building is under construction. This project should move rapidly now. The structural components are on site. In today's world, you can expect to have to wait for some building materials. The completion is estimated to be late Spring. Our public works employees have been working out of a temporary office building since the fire in 2019. This will be a great addition to the City.

Our infrastructure will continue to see upgrades throughout the City; with street repairs and improvements to our water system. The parks will continue to receive the "we can" attitude. The treatment plant will see major changes in the future, as our community complies with new regulations dealing with the treatment of waste water.

Our Fire Department also faced new challenges throughout the year, as well as a high call level for service this past year. Due to the long hot summer, education in fire prevention is very important in reducing fires. In the home and urban interface, we can all do our part. Remember the old saying with Smokey the Bear, "Only You Can Prevent Fires." Thank you firefighters for protecting our community.

Law enforcement is always working to serve and protect the residents of our community. The tragedy last January, with the Haynie family homicides were very emotional. Policy changes were implemented for police officers responding to horrific scenes. We would like to express our gratitude, for all you do to protect our community, and the sacrifices you make for citizens. Thank you Police Officers.

With the challenges of 2020, our library launched new programs. Residents can now go online to reserve books. Our library also creates care packages that are set outside for curbside pick-up. For

those who were home bound, a delivery service was set up. Many changes were implemented to prevent the shutdown of the library. Thank you for your creativity and ingenuity. We have a lot to be proud of in the Library.

At this time, I would like to recognize my Staff Directors. They are the most conscientious and dedicated employees; always striving for excellence, and accepting nothing less. This is their commitment to our citizens. Thank you.

Tonight, I need to thank all the employees of Grantsville City, for their dedication to our residents during this eventful year, continually responding to the latest challenges. Back in March, we put a hold on all spending. We were not sure how this pandemic was financially going to effect the City. We were in budget meetings for the coming year and the numbers were changing by the hour. Our innovation was tested. I am proud to say all departments met the challenge. We will continue working together, going forward together, harnessing the pioneer spirit of our community, in preparation for our future. You are the greatest team.

The audit for the past year was completed in December. For the eighth year, the city received a clean audit. No findings. Once again, the independent audit showed our finances are in order. This is one of the most important responsibilities I have, to make sure our finances are in order. I strive to make every dollar count, as I know that is important to you as a tax payer. The state of our City is financially sound. No City is better prepared than Grantsville to meet future challenges. I know that, because I have worked side by side for eleven years with you. Together, we have set the new standard for budgetary management which strengthens our community.

A groundbreaking event was held this past fall, marking the start of the construction of the LakeView Business Park. A lot of work has occurred to get us to this point. This was an important milestone in attracting businesses to come to our City. This business park will have a tremendous economic impact on our community. It's so rewarding to see this vision begin to grow. This business park will not only benefit the community, but will benefit and employ many residents in the valley, providing an opportunity to work closer to home and eliminate having to commute farther.

The volunteers in our community are vital to our success. Many programs could not happen without their support. This past year it has been the volunteers of many sporting, recitals and other events that have provided the entertainment we all cherish. Thank you volunteers.

We should all show our appreciation to our veterans, the men and women in uniform. To those who have served and those now serving, we say "Thank You". For your contributions to our community and for your service to our nation. Your sacrifices have allowed us this lifestyle we enjoy. Thank you.

I would like to take a moment to recognize our School District, school teachers and staff. Our teachers were challenged to teach differently --online. They are used to a classroom atmosphere, where it is easier to answer student's questions and watch them learn and grow. They have been asked during this pandemic to conduct school in an unconventional way, and then to change teaching methods again and again. I acknowledge how challenging this has been. Your determination and commitment to educating our children is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

I wish to express my thanks to the doctors and front line nurses and staff, for your unwavering courage to help those affected by this virus. We know you are exhausted from this pandemic, but we will always be grateful.

We are also grateful to the Tooele County Health Department employees, who have been diligent in contact tracing and vaccine distribution, which has begun in our County. We are grateful for their willingness, their time and hard work. Thank you.

We show our gratitude to the scientists and doctors for the development of the vaccine and those leaders who have helped guide us through this past year. For those who have been on call for all of us, 24/7, whenever we needed you. Thank you. So please roll up your sleeves and get your shot when the vaccine is available to you. The vaccine will help keep you safe. It is the pathway forward for you and your family, and our community.....I also offer heartfelt and sincere condolences to the families who have lost loved ones to this dreaded virus.

City Council members, nothing would be possible without your support. Each year is an achievement. While we have accomplished a lot, there are bigger plans in the future. Hard work, vision, sacrifice, and dedication will be required to continue having successes. There is work to do, and we are not slowing down. I'm extremely proud of each of you. It has been a privilege to work with each of you.

To my right is Councilman Darrin Rowberry, Councilwoman Jewel Allen, Councilman Jeff Hutchins, Councilman Scott Stice, and Councilwoman Krista Sparks. Thank you for your service to make our community the place we call home. A great place to live and raise our families.

I am honored and humbled to stand before you tonight as Mayor of this great City. As I enter this final chapter, I have many to thank for their mentoring. You know who you are. Thank you. I sincerely appreciate your time, commitment, service, and friendship. No one can do this alone. I look forward to the year ahead. We have much to do. It has been a great honor being Mayor of Grantsville, my hometown. This honor is one I will always cherish.

After this term, I have chosen to be able to spend time with my family. The love of my life, Corene, and I will be celebrating our 46th wedding anniversary in a couple of weeks. She has always been there for me. I love her and appreciate her support, encouragement and her time. Thank you to our sons, Ryan and Colin, and their families (my grandchildren), my mother Ruth and Jack, my siblings and their families, Corene's mother and father, Delores and Marlow, along with Corene's siblings and their families. Family is a circle of strength, love and hope. They are my greatest joy. We need to take a moment to appreciate the time we have with each other.

In closing, I am looking forward to the year ahead. Our future is very bright. This City is in a unique position, ready to make real progress and solve our challenges together. We have reminders of what we can do when we have vision, leadership, and the desire to get our project across the goal line. It's not easy, but nothing worthwhile ever is.

We live in interesting times. I'm proud that we are working together. We are a strong City because of our history. To secure that for our next generation, we need to continue to be responsible, keep building our community, and keep shaping our City together. As we witness our City change, we can ponder the pros and cons of a growing community. I think it's fair to say, we all love our City. We all

have different perspectives and responsibilities. We will not always agree, but that diversity makes our City stronger.

I believe that our City is definitely stronger than it ever has been. In government there is an absolute need to work together. I know that by continuing to work together we will achieve the goals so important to our future. We have already accomplished so much.

God Bless You. God Bless America and God Bless Grantsville City.

Thank you.