

NOVEMBER 8, 2011 – ELECTION NIGHT SPEECH

Ralph Becker

For the past several months, I campaigned the way I always do – I walked door to door, meeting people, listening to and talking to the residents of SLC, and learning what's on our citizens' minds. And, I thought and planned with others for a future with me in the position of mayor I have sought.

That interaction is as important as anything I do as mayor:

- The 82-year old gentleman who told me that he has been trying for decades to get a sidewalk gap bridged, led to long-needed sidewalk work.
- The neighborhood street where folks complained about the disruption in their lives from a drug house, leading to a bust and shut-down of the operation and arrest of the offenders.

These types of reminders of what makes a City livable and what we do in our community is at the core of why Salt Lake City government maintains a reputation in so many ways of being responsive, accountable, and transparent.

The feedback I got on front porches – and tonight’s election victory – reflect that people like the direction we’ve been heading and the way my administration has approached governance for Salt Lake City. They like that we provide quality services efficiently without raising taxes and a positive path toward a successful future as a Great American City. I share tonight’s victory with this City and all of you. Despite an economy that has forced other cities to come to a grinding halt, Salt Lake City is running victory laps by comparison. We continue to move forward. And all of you continue to stay engaged. For tonight’s result I say, “thank you and congratulations”.

It has been four years of change for the City. I came in with an agenda in 2008. I pursued it. And lucky for me, I had wonderful people to help achieve most of the goals I came into office with. We were very proactive in many areas, but we also did our best to respond to the things that fall in the lap of a city over the course of four years (e.g. Chevron oil spills, a dilapidated Public Safety Building, Sports Complex development, and Parleys Nature Park Resource Management Plan).

We will continue to pay attention to make sure we handle those matters well – that we're ready for the unexpected. – And we will continue to pay attention to the various moving parts that make a city run well.

Over the next four years, we will see City Creek Center open and, with it, a burst of excitement and new energy downtown. We will continue to see tremendous transportation advancements; we'll have light rail down North Temple and to the airport by mid-2013 or sooner, we'll have more bike lanes, and we'll have streetcars. We will provide shelter and food for the homeless and hungry. We will continue to make it clear to Utah and the rest of world that we're an inclusive City, that we're welcoming and accepting of all. We will protect our treasured mountains, deserts, and water resources.

And, I will continue to govern with values and principles reflected in the Salt Lake Solutions endeavor: engage those affected by decisions in a respectful dialog, establish clear objectives, brainstorm alternatives, and arrive, as much as possible, at consensus solutions.

As I promised four years ago, I will continue to push in areas that City government hasn't always championed. I will keep the City in the ongoing dialogue on our education system to help Salt Lake City Schools be the best in the State of Utah. And I will continue to put more resources behind serving the West side of Salt Lake City, with efforts like the Jordan River Trail, North Temple as a model street and redevelopment area, the Nine Line connecting trail between the east and west sides of Salt Lake City, Fisher Mansion restoration, and a new library in Glendale.

Naturally, there are a lot of people I would like to thank tonight. A big thank you goes first of all to Matt Lyon and Weston Clark, who served as my campaign managers; to Harvest Daurelle, TJ Ellerbeck, and Ashley Sumner, who kept the day to day and week to week functioning of the campaign going for me. And, to the ever-faithful and hard working, pleasant LaVone Liddle-Gamonal, who again served as my campaign treasurer.

There were members of my amazing staff in City Hall who assisted on the campaign, and I would like to thank David Everitt, Vicki Bennett, Bob Farrington, Joanne Milner, Karen Hale, Helen Langan, and Ben McAdams, and particularly Amy

Gale and Rachel George, who together had to manage the double schedule of a campaign and a Mayor. There are so many more in City Hall who have been so supportive, and I wish I could name every one of you, but I'd get the hook for going on too long! So a big thank you to the best group of City Hall employees any Mayor could have!

I also want to thank some special members of our community at large who served as volunteer committee chairs to help me build my campaign platforms: Jeffrey Burke on Arts and Culture; John Netto and Rev. Catherine Putnam on Social Justice; Tim Brown on Sustainability; Meg Holbrook on Education, John Nepstad on Mobility; and Betsy Burton on Economic Development.

And finally, to my family ... my Mom, Ann Becker, my brother Bill and sister-in-law Joan, my sons Derek and Will, my granddaughter Tiana, and especially to Kate ... thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your love and support. I couldn't do any of this without you.

Now, before the hook comes to pull me away from the microphone, I want to offer one last thought. If I could make

one wish for Salt Lake City for the next four years, it would be this: ... Regardless of what happens in the political and economic climates in this country, I wish for Salt Lake City that we continue our ascent toward reaching our potential as a great American City!!!

Okay, let's enjoy the night