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## STATE OF THE CITY Mayor Ralph Becker January 12, 2010

Good evening. I am honored to be here tonight. I acknowledge the esteemed guests in the chamber this evening; in particular, one of Salt Lake City's newest residents, my mother – Ann Becker.

To my friends and colleagues on the City Council: I congratulate new Council Chair JT Martin and new Vice Chair Jill Remington Love. I extend a warm welcome to new District Three Council member Stan Penfold. I welcome back for the start of a new term, Carlton Christiansen, Jill, and Soren Simonsen. And to Van Turner, Luke Garrott, and JT, welcome to another year on the Council!

I thank you all for your dedication and hard work with which you pursue greatness for Salt Lake City.

Tonight, as I deliver this, my third State of the City address, I continue to be honored to serve you and the residents of this wonderful city as Mayor.

I also continue to be *energized* by this job. I am energized by the amazing potential this city holds and by the amazing people in this community. Across the country and here in Salt Lake City, this past year was not an easy one, but I have been heartened and inspired by the way this city and all of you have pulled together to forge ahead and accomplish so much in the way of improvements and progress for our home.

This place holds the potential, but it's the people who tap into it and make it all happen. I am always so encouraged by the people I get to work with both inside and outside of City Hall; by the residents I meet out in our neighborhoods as well as those who come to see me in my office; by the business owners I talk to who put it all on the line in and for Salt Lake City; and I am encouraged by the participation of residents who advocate different viewpoints, because they bring on the robust dialogue that helps us govern better and achieve better outcomes for our city.

As we strive for and achieve progress in our capital city, we cannot help but influence progress in our neighboring cities, in the state, and, in fact, in the region. As Mayor, I regard this both as a significant responsibility Salt Lake City bears and as a point of civic pride. This past year was one marked by great dialogue and great progress in our city, and it is my hope that 2010 will see more of the same, and that Salt Lake City will continue to shine as the centerpiece of our region.

If I were to sum up the accomplishments of 2009 and our goals for 2010 in one word, it would be “livability.” Salt Lake City is a gem of an urban environment. It is a standout among American cities *because of its livability*.

We all know what we have here – a metropolitan area with unsurpassed recreational outlets, gorgeous natural resources and scenery, a world-class research university, an international airport, lively neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, a thriving business community, a resurgent downtown, expanding public transit, increasing diversity in our population, and lots of culture and entertainment.

By the way we care for these assets and facilitate the inevitable growth in our city, we model for our neighbors in this and surrounding states the kind of livability that makes a city great.

During my administration, the measures we have taken, and those that we plan to take in the future, are centered on enhancing the livability of Salt Lake City.

These measures fall into four essential categories – Environment, Efficiency, Equality and Engagement. Cultivating the principles and possibilities within these four categories has been our work over the past two years, and will guide our work over the next two years as well.

Let me share with you some of the highlights:

## ENVIRONMENT

Salt Lake City’s natural beauty draws us to this place. Our City is surrounded by the grandeur of the Wasatch, the serenity of the Great Salt Lake, and the lure of wilderness. The decisions we make as a City impact the livability we enjoy today — and hope for tomorrow.

We have worked to provide transportation options to those who live in the city and those who travel into the City for work, school, shopping and entertainment. These options provide alternatives to automobile use and support our efforts to address the air quality in our region.

In the last year, we have installed 38 miles of new bike lanes within the city, representing a 32 percent increase in bike lanes and a total of 158 lane-miles. The City also recently

recruited Becka Roofl from Vermont as our first Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, complementing the skills of Dan Bergenthal, our bike/trails coordinator.

While just a year ago the vision of streetcars was decades away, we fast-tracked the dream, and have now, with the help of South Salt Lake and UTA, advanced the Sugar House Streetcar Project. Efforts are now underway to select the route for a Downtown streetcar line and begin detailed assessment for a line to South Davis County.

Partnerships are vital to these big projects. Thanks to the RDA; Congressman Bishop and the Congressional delegation; UTA; Wasatch Front Regional Council; our state legislators; South Salt Lake; and Bountiful Mayor Joe Johnson for their support of mass transit.

The Airport Light Rail line is well underway. Signs of this project are noticeable as construction begins at the Salt Lake City International Airport and heads through our city.

In the coming months, a few remaining hurdles notwithstanding, we will begin the project to rebuild the North Temple Viaduct in conjunction with the light rail construction.

With the help of Governor Huntsman, Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corroon and the efforts of Salt Lake Solutions, we unveiled the Clear the Air Challenge and the Idle-Free Campaign, reminding us that we each play a role in the quality of our air.

I look forward to continuing efforts with Mayor Corroon and now Governor Herbert. Our air quality is unacceptable and threatens our City's livability; we must look at every way possible to reduce air pollution. The Salt Lake Solutions effort uniquely calls on each of us and reminds us — and even challenges us — to take measures to reduce our vehicles miles traveled (VMTs), the largest contributor to pollution.

Many thanks to the partners from all levels of government, chambers of commerce, civic and environmental groups, and faith organizations who have come together to devise a strategy and help carry out actions we are continuing with our New Year's Resolutions this winter.

We completed Riparian Corridor Studies along the Emigration and Red Butte Creeks, laying the groundwork for guidelines to help us protect and preserve the valuable community asset our local streams provide. This coming year we will focus on completing studies for City Creek and Parleys Creek and developing recommended management plans for those corridors.

Last year the Department of Energy awarded Salt Lake City an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant for over \$2.1 million. With an eye on this funding, the Administration, the Council and Salt Lake City residents worked to identify high-priority energy conservation projects that meet goals for job creation, CO2 emission reduction,

and long-term energy planning and development of sustainable programs.

With funding from the Energy Block Grant, our Sustainability and Economic Development offices have designed the Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund to help small businesses and commercial building owners upgrade their facilities with energy efficiency measures. Since over half the energy consumed in Salt Lake City is used in commercial buildings, this program will make a significant impact.

The Revolving Loan Fund mitigates the impact of capital costs. And once the loan is paid back, the business owner will pocket the ongoing energy savings, while we all benefit from the decreased demand on our power supply and decreased emissions of green house gases.

And, as we have looked for ways to implement sustainable practices throughout the City's communities, we have not overlooked our responsibilities right here in City Hall. We have increased the emphasis on paper reduction by the use of electronic storage; the Parks Division has reduced its water consumption by 10 percent; City-wide we have seen reductions in electricity, natural gas, diesel and gasoline consumption, and the Police Department has incorporated the use of Hybrids into its fleet of patrol vehicles.

We also continue to provide UTA passes to our employees who use mass transit. You don't think this makes a difference? Let me tell you about Bill Porm, building operator and lead mechanic for Salt Lake City facilities.

When Bill, who lives in South Ogden, heard the Frontrunner commuter train was going to be a reality, he and his wife purposefully looked for and bought a home only one mile from a Frontrunner station. With two young children as a primary incentive, Bill now rides his bike to the station and takes the train to and from work every day.

Bill stopped me in the hall the other day. He expressed his gratitude to the City for "allowing" him to be healthy, for helping to essentially save him at least \$350 each month in car and fuel expenses, and for helping him do his part to improve air quality. Now, that is livability.

Yet we have much to do! This year, the City will continue to explore ways to conserve energy and enhance the livability of our community.

I am pleased to announce that a glass recycling program will be available to our downtown businesses beginning next week. Implementation of this program will divert recyclable waste from the landfill and save energy.

We are currently engaged in an energy audit, testing two types of energy efficient street lights that have been installed at various locations throughout the City. The lamps being tested are LED and induction lamps and are expected to provide significant energy and

maintenance savings. Test samples have been installed adjacent to existing lights to provide a side-by-side comparison.

Tonight I invite everyone to go to the City's website to see a map showing the types and locations of lights that are being considered to replace our existing street lights. Your review of the lights will be very helpful in the decision-making process. If the recommendations of the audit are acceptable, the City could implement a project to replace a significant portion of the city's 15,000 street lamps.

And, this year Salt Lake City will adopt a comprehensive sustainability ordinance. This ordinance, reaching all parts of our code, will effectively address how all of us in the City can live more sustainably, from the trees we plant in our front yards to the way our curbs and gutters are designed to provide for recapture of storm water.

City residents and businesses will see the removal of barriers as the City adopts its comprehensive ordinance that includes increasing the places and ways residents and businesses can capture renewable energy, conserve water used on outdoor landscaping, and produce food locally in the urban environment – the recently approved beekeeping and urban chicken farming ordinances are examples of the far-reaching range of what will be the nation's most comprehensive City sustainability ordinance.

As I talk to fellow mayors and experts across the country about sustainability, I realize Salt Lake City is recognized as a national leader in sustainable practices.

## EFFICIENCY

A livable City is efficient. Decisions and actions are deliberate, purposeful, and respectful of our time, our taxpayer dollars and our natural resources.

We have seen great efficiency with the implementation of software for external access to City services and information. Residents, business owners and developers continue to appreciate the One-Stop Shop, where permit applications are accepted online.

By moving plan submission and review online, paper consumption, printing costs, greenhouse gas emissions, drive time and phone-based inquiries to City personnel have been greatly reduced or eliminated for each permit application. Customers have the ability to submit their plans electronically, online, from anywhere in the world that has a connection to the internet; pay with a credit card and then get 'real-time' updates and review comments from City Plan Review staff across six City departments. All of this without actually visiting City Hall or having paper plans delivered several times to City Hall for review.

Our professional, innovative City Staff have made this a possibility, especially our project implementation managers Lisa Shaffer and Nole Walkingshaw and our technology consultant, Kent Overly. Bill Haight's IMS staff have also worked tirelessly to support this initiative; especially Long Doan and Rob Craven.

Last month, two major tenants of City Creek, Macy's and Nordstrom, chose to take advantage of the City's electronic plan submission.

The electronic submission of plans for two large projects did not go unnoticed by our implementation manager Lisa Shaffer. She said, "This was HUGE for both applicants since they are both out of town. Because of our combined web-based database and our electronic plan review software, these customers did not need to print out multiple sets of drawings, and they did not need to fly in to submit. Both applicants were 'blown away' at the technology and gave the City accolades for our progressive way of doing business."

She added, "I'm proud to be a part of an organization that is invested in partnering with our development community to make things happen. Thanks for involving me in all of the amazing changes we have made!" Thanks for that feedback, Lisa!

We have thoughtfully worked to implement efficiency measures for our employees and those who do business with the City, and also in the way we handle the City's assets such as real estate and buildings. This last year we created a new division that will help Salt Lake City government make more strategic, efficient and fiscally sound decisions on all of our long term capital asset projects. The Capital Asset Management Division will address the planning, project development, financing, and budgeting for the City's capital asset projects.

Last year Salt Lake City made a 4.3 percent cut from the previous year's budget. We are now making an additional 2 percent cut – again with no layoffs – through further efficiencies.

As cuts were made last year, City employees made a significant sacrifice with a 1.5 percent across-the-board salary reduction, as well as an increase in their health insurance premiums.

I am pleased to announce that with the efficiencies we have identified, and despite the additional 2 percent cut, our City employees WILL NOT be seeing a further reduction in their paychecks.

I will be recommending to the City Council that all full-time City employees receive a \$300 one-time bonus in recognition of their sacrifices and efforts.

Thank you to those who work for Salt Lake City. Your dedication, professionalism and hard work are appreciated.

## EQUALITY

A city's livability factor is also measured by the opportunities for success that are shared by all residents. The inclusive nature of Salt Lake City's businesses, neighborhoods, and public places is vital to a strong sense of belonging.

Under the direction of our Education Partnership Coordinator, Joanne Milner, we continue to work as partners with the Salt Lake City School District to ensure opportunities for success of all students in Salt Lake City.

Last year, the City hosted the Early Childhood Learning Summit. Experts gathered to discuss the importance of investment of time and funding in the first five years of a child's life – critical to a child's development and lifetime success.

With the help of federal dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we were able to assist individuals and families who were either without housing or were faced with the threat of losing shelter.

Through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program, our Division of Housing and Neighborhood Development put an almost \$1.7 million three-year grant to work to quickly re-house and stabilize those who were experiencing homelessness and help those who needed temporary help with utility and rent payments.

And in December the City hosted a conference to present ideas for a long term strategy for homeless services in our City.

Our Office of Diversity and Human Rights works diligently "to elevate the protection of basic human rights for all Salt Lake City residents through policy solutions, education, advocacy and celebration."

Events and seminars are held throughout the year to educate diverse populations about the opportunities and rights that are available to residents of our City.

Annually, the Office hosts Diverse Business Day at the Legislature to encourage civic engagement throughout the City's diverse communities.

The Office co-sponsored a Community Dialogue on Sexual Violence, working closely with several community organizations to help promote awareness. And last month we celebrated Human Rights Day, recognizing the many residents in our city who are refugees from other countries and make contributions to our community.

The Office of Diversity and Human Rights and the Salt Lake City Human Rights Commission were integral to the passage of the Nondiscrimination Ordinances unanimously approved by our City Council in November. Designed to protect City residents from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in housing and employment, the ordinances were supported by an overwhelming range of business, government, faith and community leaders.

This year, the Office of Diversity and Human Rights will launch the Mayor's Antidiscrimination Campaign to address workers' rights. We will work closely with both employers and employees to educate the City's increasingly diverse workforce.

Also coming online in 2010 will be the development of opportunities for the coordination of athletic and academic discipline for at-risk students in the Tennis and Tutoring program at Liberty Park. The aim of the program is to provide one-on-one tutoring *and* tennis instruction in partnership with the Salt Lake City School District, the University of Utah's Lowell Bennion Community Service Center, the Utah Tennis Association and other community partners. Its goal is to raise academic achievement in alignment with positive character development, and a healthy lifestyle.

And because equality demands representation and access to basic services, the City is working aggressively to ensure all of the City's residents are counted in the 2010 Census.

An accurate Census is important to the City for several reasons:

- Sales tax is distributed from the State level based partly on population as determined by the Census;
- The results of the Census determine how almost \$400 billion in federal funds are distributed annually throughout the country. We want to make sure Salt Lake City receives its fair share.

The City has formed a Complete Count Committee to help us reach out to all communities throughout the Capital City. We want all of our residents to know filling out the Census form is safe, confidential and important to the services we provide here in Salt Lake City.

## ENGAGEMENT

A City's livability is marked not only by its physical attributes, but also by its ability to engage its residents and visitors. A livable City is host to spaces that foster the arts and human interaction and recreation; provides a fertile business climate; and is a place where public input and participation in decision making are welcome and integral to an open government process.

Early last year the City sought the comments and input of the Arts Community in a series of facilitated meetings to discuss the proposed development of a Performing Arts Center on Main Street.

With the RDA's selection of a developer for the project now complete, we will be resuming those meetings, involving the arts and downtown groups as we move forward to determine the size, the scope, and the programming of the facility.

We are currently negotiating an interlocal agreement with Salt Lake County to define partnerships and funding strategies for a cultural arts district for new and already existing cultural facilities.

Main Street's cultural vitality and vibrancy will be further enhanced with the RDA's purchase of the historic Utah Theater, finalized just last week. Part of a continuing thread of the momentum led by the development of the City Creek Center, the historic space across the street from the future site of the Performing Arts Center will provide cultural and retail opportunities.

A few blocks southeast of the Utah Theater, The Leonardo is taking shape to become the first science-tech-art center in the country. As The Leonardo's Senior Advisor and Nobel Laureate Mario Capecchi says, The Leonardo is "an important element in the future education of our community, state and region." Asbestos removal has been completed and seismic renovation has begun. Last fall I had the honor of announcing the official opening date for the Leonardo which will take place in 2011 on the center namesake's birthday, April 15.

With cultural opportunities rising, we are also seeing the rise of new parks and accessible trails to engage our passion for outdoor recreation. Community and Development Block Grants kick-started new parks and soccer fields in Rose Park and Glendale; the Parley's Trail is moving west through the Historic Nature Park; and the Jordan River Parkway is inching its way to completion as the final stretch to Davis County is now being designed and options for trail crossings over active Union Pacific rail lines are aggressively pursued.

Indeed, the City's multiple livability factors, including our cultural and recreational offerings, play off one another, attracting and engaging businesses and development and moving us forward.

We are seeing signs of economic resurgence in Salt Lake City, helping to bump us to a better economic position than many cities around the nation. Perhaps you have heard City Economic Development Director Bob Farrington talk about the recent influx of business to our City:

In downtown Salt Lake City, over 30 new street-level businesses have opened in the past several months. And this month, one of our City's local dining icons, the Red Iguana, is expanding into its second location in the Euclid neighborhood on South Temple and will soon open another outlet in the City Creek food court.

Another local favorite, Rico's, has expanded with the opening of the Frida Bistro on 7th South and 5th West, not only helping to build economic benefits, but also providing us with new dining options.

Downtown's beautiful 222 Main Street Building is now open with tenants quickly filling the spaces and final preparations are underway for a major, soon-to-be-announced tenant.

One of the nation's largest automobile parts retailers, O'Reilly Auto Parts, recently announced it was opening a western distribution center in Salt Lake City and hiring 400 new employees, demonstrating our successful efforts to position Salt Lake City as a western distribution hub.

Other major new industrial expansions — retaining or adding hundreds of jobs in Salt Lake City — have been announced by Waxie Corporation, Young Electric, Northrup Grumman and Komatsu Machinery.

Our small local businesses engage our neighborhoods and contribute not only to the unique characteristics of each community, but also to the livability of each community.

Exciting businesses such as Pago Restaurant in the 9<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> business district, Cucina Nassi for Special Events in Sugarhouse, and Bingham Cyclery across from Pioneer Park bring energy and excitement to our urban neighborhoods.

The Local First Utah organization aptly reminds us that “local businesses are, in a real sense, the backbone of any community. It is nearly impossible to imagine our neighborhoods...without them.”

In two weeks, on January 28, our Economic Development Office will host the Neighborhood Business Conference, focusing on strengthening our neighborhood business districts and providing information about how the City can be a resource and advocate for small businesses.

Our residents have been engaged in the safety and security of their neighborhoods. They have been involved in Neighborhood Watch programs and have worked to support the efforts of the Police Department. Through the combined efforts of our skilled law enforcement officers and engaged residents, Salt Lake City has seen crime numbers and injury accidents at a three-year low. Violent crimes and property crimes are down over 10 percent. And injury accidents are down over 15 percent. We will continue to work in partnership with residents to protect their safety and security and be responsive to their needs.

Over the last year, Salt Lake City’s Emergency Management Director Cory Lyman, in conjunction with Salt Lake County and other municipalities, has been engaging City residents and emergency services professionals from all government levels to prepare for a full-scale earthquake exercise in 2012.

As we work, play and live in our City, the way we make decisions and the opportunities for engagement of our residents as those decisions are made play an important role in the livability of our City.

Salt Lake Solutions has helped model the way the City works in partnership with residents, businesses, all levels of government and organizations to make substantive changes for the progress of our City, address challenges and solve problems.

With the completion of the Historic Structures Report, the Fisher Mansion Partners Team will resume meetings to determine the eventual public use of the historic mansion along the Jordan River – the goal of the first Salt Lake Solutions project – and decide how to allocate the \$150,000 Save America’s Treasures federal appropriation awarded to the City with the help of our Congressional delegation.

This year, Salt Lake Solutions will participate in efforts to stem hunger in our community by helping to facilitate planning for the development of a food security community center in the Glendale / Poplar Grove area. With the engagement of the People’s Market, Wasatch Community Gardens, Utahns Against Hunger and other community groups, the

process includes an assessment of how the Jordan Park Greenhouse might be the primary location for food security center activities.

One year ago we launched the open government initiative, an effort to open up City government to all residents and others who do business with the City, inviting them to be active participants and providing them with accessible, usable, easy-to-understand information that would empower them to take part in governance.

We are constantly working at improving, defining and refining methods for public input. We learned valuable lessons from the site selection process for the Public Safety Buildings, first unveiling two options for a site; then hosting 11 open houses and three community workshops; gathering public comment; and subsequently making a site recommendation. Public engagement was essential to the process and eventual outcome for the siting of our new Public Safety Buildings.

With skilled staff, our City departments have raised the bar for effectively courting and employing the participation of residents in the decision making process.

Our Public Utilities Department worked together with neighborhood-based organizations, individuals and the Historic Landmark Commission – in what could have been a controversial project – to plan and implement the demolition of the 13<sup>th</sup> East Reservoir and the successful, aesthetically pleasing restoration of the site.

The Department of Community and Economic Development engaged in an extensive public outreach and education effort to craft amendments to alcohol regulations that support community and business goals.

Public engagement included meetings with community council chairs, City boards and commissions, public open houses, the City's webpage, and eight neighborhood discussion groups. The process led to one unanimously approved proposal to lift the two-bar-per-block face limitation in the Downtown area and an additional yet-to-be-approved proposal regarding alcohol related uses in other areas of the City – a proposal that is now much different from the original draft, thanks to public feedback.

Another public open house will be held this Thursday night to present the latest proposal to the public, and the Salt Lake City Planning Commission will consider the proposal on January 27.

This year, Salt Lake City will initiate a public engagement process that is unprecedented. We will build on our efforts to promote engagement of the public at an early stage, incorporate the opinions and feedback into the beginning phases of the decision making

process and routinely identify the issues and concerns of proposals before decisions are made.

And, as we explore alternatives, identify a preferred option, and make a decision, we will provide information and the rationale for our decisions along the way for everyone to see and comment on.

We will undertake the task of reviewing the relationship of the City and our neighborhood-based organizations – organizations that are essential to the strength and stability of our communities – and find ways to effectively support the efforts of residents and business owners.

## **A “COMPLETE” EXAMPLE OF LIVABILITY**

Our effort to redevelop North Temple as a Complete Street combines all of the elements of livability.

While we feel the pains of construction, we will see the progress of a complete street in the making.

Overall, we are investing nearly a half billion dollars to transform this major neighborhood central corridor and entrance to our Capital City.

In addition to the light rail construction project, we are investing in undergrounding power lines along North Temple, embedding light rail track, bringing pedestrian friendly sidewalks, bike lanes on road and off-road, and landscaping along North Temple, in a project we are now calling the Capital City Boulevard Project on North Temple.

We will also be incorporating state-of-the-art energy and environmental features like solar power on TRAX stations, warm asphalt mixes, permeable concrete, and cooling landscaping.

The four E’s of livability are clearly at play here. The environmental benefits are obviously substantial. Efficiency is evident in the upfront planning and collaborative financing on this project. The equality of access and opportunities that will evolve along this corridor will include the multiple modes of transportation and the variety of residential and commercial spaces. And, moving forward, our planning and zoning will be reworked with continued intensive community engagement.

We will reshape this area of our city and create a grand entry for visitors, but more importantly a real community worthy of the people who live here and the majesty of our

city. These improvements — together with the new North Temple viaduct, a maintenance district to preserve our investment, and updated zoning to encourage higher density, transit and pedestrian friendly development along this corridor — will be a source of frustration and challenges from time to time as we move toward completion of this project. I assure you that it will be worth it.

In closing, if there is any story being told here tonight, it is the story of Salt Lake City coming into its potential as a Great American City. I took office two years ago with blueprints in my hands, and today, at the midpoint in my term, I have in one hand lists of accomplishments and, in the other hand, lists of action items for implementing and completing the many initiatives that are now under way.

Every step we take toward enhancing livability in Salt Lake City is another step toward achieving that greatness. Yet whether it's for the advancement of our Environment, or for Efficiency, or for the Equality and Engagement of our citizens, none of what we achieve here is done solely by City officials.

The real mover and shaker behind our city's progress is collaborative government. For the past two years, we have employed a model for governing here in Salt Lake City that seeks to break down boundary lines and silos, and instead looks to pull together people, ideas, and resources.

We are reaching out, we are listening, we are adapting, and we are moving forward. We may not always agree with one another, but we will continue to make good decisions by bringing more people to the table and into the dialogue, rather than fewer. This, too, will make our City great.

We have forged many new and important relationships over the past two years, and we have worked hard to strengthen and reinforce others. Most notable is our increasingly beneficial ties to the Obama administration and Congress. I've learned a great deal from the opportunities to participate in White House conferences and represent our City as I testified before a Senate committee.

Not only have we been able to secure specific financial commitments from the federal government, but we have also been able to put Salt Lake City on the government's radar screen as a place to watch, a model for progress, quality growth, and livability among American cities. This has had, and will continue to have, significant benefits for Salt Lakers, Utahns, and the Intermountain West.

As the capital city that draws attention and funding and employers and people, Salt Lake City is a magnet for the region. I will be calling upon the leaders and residents of this state to recognize and support – with tax dollars – the disproportionate load that Salt Lake City carries.

Whether on a grand scale, as the region’s cultural center, or on a more ordinary scale, as a service provider to a population that doubles every day, Salt Lake City serves many in our state and in our region and deserves appropriate financial recognition for its role. We are a capital city, we are a magnet, and we are an economic driver for the region.

I am proud and pleased to be able to call so many of the leaders in this city and state my friends. Whether city employees, community council chairs, other mayors, legislators, or other community leaders, I know we are all working together toward the same result – preserving and enhancing the livability of our communities.

And I have been proud to share what we’re doing in Salt Lake City with my colleagues in other parts of Utah. Most recently, other Utah municipalities have inquired about our nondiscrimination ordinance, hoping to use Salt Lake City as a model for their own communities.

In the end, though, it will be Salt Lake City’s leadership on livability that will have the greatest regional impact and the greatest long-term value to us all.

Daniel Kemmis, a friend who is widely regarded as the Mountain West’s leading contemporary thinker and writer on topics of community, regionalism and human society, spoke at our Sustainability Summit in March and had this to say: “We must lead with an emphasis on livability. Sustainability will follow, indeed sustainable prosperity will follow. Livability has become the gold standard of our economy.”

This is where we’re heading, and all of us – working together – can make it happen. Please continue to join me in this journey.

Thank you.