



State of the City 2018 Mayor Tom Tait

Feb. 6, 2018, City National Grove of Anaheim

I love watching that video and seeing all we've done together in the past year. But what I love more is seeing what's happening right now.

We're building a culture in Anaheim that is inclusive, expansive, dynamic and empowering.

I see it in the way we support the dreams and aspirations of all our residents.

I see it in the shift of the city's attention and resources to our neighborhoods.

I see it in the way our businesses — large and small — are thriving.

I see it in the way our commitment to freedom is creating an environment for entrepreneurs to bring their dreams to life right here in Anaheim.

I see it in the way we run our city with a deep and abiding commitment to kindness.

This is all happening for several reasons:

- The City Council moving from citywide to district representation
- The kindness campaign taking root and building social infrastructure
- Our commitment to making Anaheim a city that welcomes people of all kinds, all ages, all races, all backgrounds
- Our commitment to accelerate the growth of small businesses throughout out city

So I'm happy to report that the State of the City of Anaheim is strong and getting stronger every day.

Canyon Fires

I want to start by recognizing Anaheim Fire & Rescue Chief Randy Bruegman and his amazing team.

They are outstanding public servants, committed to protecting our lives and property.

In October during Canyon Fire 2, their skill and expertise was on full display. I've lived here since 1988 and this was one of the most dangerous things I've seen.

Deputy Chiefs Pat Russell and Tim O'Hara led the teams who fought to gain control and extinguish the fire while helping those in danger to safety.

But our firefighters weren't alone. Every city department stepped up.

Public Utilities made sure firefighters had enough water. City employees from all departments manned the call centers and managed road traffic so the police could focus on helping residents in danger.

People from all over the city pitched in.

In the days immediately after the fires, I met with residents outside their burned homes. They told me how their neighbors had rallied to help them through these most difficult days.

Neighbors helping neighbors. It's unbelievably inspiring.

Next Up Foundation

There are so many of you in this room that are bringing kindness to life.

Vina Tinoco and the team at Next Up Foundation are using the sport of skateboarding to teach kids character, values and responsibility.

They have gotten hundreds of neighborhood kids involved.

Not only do they teach them skateboarding, they help with homework and teach computer skills — truly transforming their lives.

Braille Institute

We have the folks from the Braille Institute with us.

Located here in west Anaheim, they serve the visually impaired throughout Orange County.

And they're growing.

Right now, the institute is undergoing a \$10 million construction project so they can help even more residents lead happy and productive lives.

Sheraton Park Hotel

And in The Anaheim Resort, Ian Gee, general manager of the Sheraton Park Hotel at the Anaheim Resort, heard from a local resident about the unique needs of autistic individuals and their families.

Imagine a family with an autistic child coming here on the vacation of their lives. They deserve it to be wonderful, but may need some help to make it so.

This got Ian's attention and he went to work.

He invested in special equipment, meal plans and places for parents to take their child in case they need some quiet time.

He's doing everything he can to help autistic children and adults have a great experience during their stay at the Sheraton.

This is kindness in action.

Anaheim White House Restaurant

Here's something I'm asked all the time: When is Bruno Serato's Anaheim White House Restaurant reopening?

Well the answer is, very soon.

And when it does, we'll have one of our city's premier dining destinations back.

However, what is most inspiring is that the restaurant fire did not stop Bruno from serving up to 3,500 hot meals every night to children in need.

Elmer Thill

And I'm very happy to report that Anaheim's oldest known resident, Elmer Thill, is with us again this year.

He turns 104 on April 11.

He's got to be the strongest and most resilient person I know.

The entire city loves you, Elmer.

Phillip Palmer

I want to take this moment now to thank today's host, Phillip Palmer.

He has been helping with these events for the past seven years without any pay.

Here's something most of you don't know about Phillip.

Ten years ago, Phillip actually donated one of his kidneys to a coworker at KABC.

He did so without hesitation. So he knows the power of kindness.

What a wonderful person.

Thanks, Phillip for your friendship.

Anaheim Ducks

Our sports teams continue to generate excitement and instill pride in our community.

The Anaheim Ducks are back in the hunt for a playoff spot.

With Captain Ryan Getzlaf returning to the ice after surgery and playing like a potential MVP, the Ducks are in the midst of a second-half surge.

And in case you missed it — they beat the Kings the last two times they played.

That's the best part.

Angels Baseball

The Angels have generated the biggest offseason news in baseball with the signing of Japanese phenom Shohei Ohtani.

He's not just a world-class pitcher, he's a prolific home run hitter. Baseball hasn't seen a dual-threat like Shohei since Babe Ruth.

Paired with the great Mike Trout, Shohei promises to make this Angels season the most exciting in years.

The Anaheim Resort

In The Anaheim Resort, we are more than halfway through the largest expansion of the Disneyland Resort since Walt Disney built the original park in 1955.

Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge is set to open next year at Disneyland, bringing millions of new visitors to Anaheim.

Meanwhile, at Disney California Adventure, work is under way on Pixar Pier.

Opening its doors in April, this new land will showcase beloved Pixar stories including "Toy Story," "The Incredibles" and "Inside Out."

City Council

We've just wrapped up our first year of district representation, a transition that will be completed this November with the election of the last two district council seats.

District representation is a foundational governance change for Anaheim and its residents.

As we have already seen, it brings our council much closer to our neighborhoods.

District 1

In District 1, representing west Anaheim, Council Member Denise Barnes has been a tireless advocate for her neighbors, committed to safe, well-kept parks and to accelerating the upkeep of roads in her district and throughout the city.

She has led the effort to bring more effective security to our parks with cameras and security guards.

As we move forward with efforts to revitalize Beach Boulevard, Denise is west Anaheim's most passionate voice on the City Council.

District 3

In District 3, representing central-north Anaheim, Council Member Jose Moreno was just named this year's Mayor Pro Tem.

One of his key accomplishments was the adoption of a sunshine ordinance, giving Anaheim the strongest ethics rules of any city in Orange County.

He helped create a framework for the city's efforts to address homelessness by chairing the Homeless Policy Working Group.

And he led the effort to secure four acres of new parkland in downtown.

District 4

In District 4, Council Member Lucille Kring represents the neighborhoods of south Anaheim and the hotels, restaurants and theme parks in The Anaheim Resort.

Her main focus is helping the businesses in her district grow.

In November, we saw the unveiling of a 200,000-square-foot expansion of the Anaheim Convention Center.

The expanded Convention Center has welcomed thousands of visitors, including a record 115,000 last month at NAMM, our largest annual convention.

District 5

In District 5 — east-central Anaheim — Council Member Stephen Faessel has worked closely with neighbors to address the impacts of homelessness along the Santa Ana River Trail.

He's also working closely with Community Services on our Planning for Parks effort to map the future of Anaheim's parks.

Steve has really taken district representation to heart by getting to know his community and engaging in a wide variety of neighborhood initiatives.

At Large

Our council's two at-large members are Kris Murray and James Vanderbilt.

Council Member Murray in September brought needed attention and focus to the increased number of homeless at the riverbed.

In December, she initiated a Community Triage Day bringing access to shelter and needed services to the homeless along the river trail.

As a result, more than 55 additional people have begun the process to find permanent housing.

Kris is also a passionate advocate for Anaheim's interests, serving on the regional planning agency that focuses on infrastructure needs in Southern California.

Serving on the City Council since 2014, James Vanderbilt has been invaluable to Anaheim by helping to activate the city's connection with our neighborhoods.

He served on our Homeless Policy Working Group and strives for common ground and common sense policies on the City Council.

And Council Member Vanderbilt began his own privately funded website and Facebook page: AnaheimCare.com.

His goal is to get food and other resources to Anaheim's most vulnerable.

To all my colleagues on the City Council, it has been my honor to serve with you this past year.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to every one of Anaheim's districts.

Interim City Manager Linda Andal

I want to thank Interim City Manager Linda Andal.

From her first day on the job, she has focused on building a culture of kindness within the city workforce.

She has brought a fresh energy and strong leadership to the office.

And I'm pleased to report she's managing the city's operations on budget.

This isn't easy, but she's making it happen.

Thanks to Linda and her executive team. Keep up the good work.

Long-term Fiscal Issues

While Linda is dealing with our short-term budget issues, our long-term fiscal challenges remain.

If you were at last year's State of the City, you heard me speak in detail about our huge, underfunded pension liability and the impact of the recent luxury hotel subsidies.

Dealing with these challenges will require continuous belt-tightening in the years to come.

Anaheim Police

I want to take this moment to thank our previous Police Chief Raul Quezada.

Raul was a leader in the creation of real and effective community policing. His work was transformational for Anaheim.

And our new acting Chief Julian Harvey, who was a key leader in this transformation, is continuing to invest in our commitment to protect our neighborhoods.

He is increasing the number of police cars on patrol, building stronger relationships with residents in every neighborhood and expanding effective interaction with the schools.

Anna Drive

I'm reminded of those terrible days after a shooting on Anna Drive in 2012.

It was terrible for the victims, their families, their neighbors, the police and for us all.

It became national news and was a sign of the urban challenges we were facing.

Anna Drive had been a troubled neighborhood for decades. It was clear that what we had been doing just wasn't working at all.

We needed a new approach. Something needed to change.

And it did.

By the way, you just saw Yesenia Rojas in the video. She is a force of nature.

I want to personally thank Yesenia for her incredible commitment to turn her neighborhood around.

This simply wouldn't have happened without her.

And I'm so proud of our police.

Their commitment to community policing is real — and it's paying off.

Since 2012, crime in Anaheim has dropped by 7 percent.

And violent crime has dropped more:

- Homicides down 33 percent
- Burglary down 16 percent
- Assault with a deadly weapon down 13 percent

These statistics are encouraging.

The police are effectively building social capital by holding people accountable, while at the same time building trust in the neighborhoods with genuine acts of kindness.

Hope Builders and ACT

As you saw in the video, Taller San Jose Hope Builders has played an important role in the transition of our neighborhoods.

Hope Builders is one of many nonprofits supported by ACT Anaheim.

ACT Anaheim is partnering with dozens of nonprofit organizations to change the lives of our city's youth.

Three years ago, we decided to donate all of the proceeds of the State of the City events to ACT.

I'm proud to let you know that since then, including today's record-breaking \$90,000, we've raised more than \$300,000 for ACT and the youth they serve.

Kindness and Freedom

When I first ran for mayor in 2010, I spoke about revitalizing the city through a focus on kindness and freedom.

This has always been about building stronger social infrastructure by connecting with each other and unleashing the energy and brilliance of all the people who live, learn and work here.

As you know, in November the City Council unanimously approved "City of Kindness" as Anaheim's official city motto.

We've been saying this for years, but now it's official.

It's our guiding principle.

It's who we are and who we aspire to be.

Anaheim is publicly committed to building a culture of kindness, where we do something good for someone without any expectation of return.

We commit to teaching our kids that acting with kindness works.

That it feels good.

That it is virtuous.

That it helps make their schools, parks and playgrounds safer, more inclusive and more fun.

Kindness is contagious.

It overcomes things such as frustration, pettiness, anger, jealousy and even hate, creating trust, openness, enthusiasm and possibility.

It's doing the right thing, even when that seems difficult.

What gives me the most satisfaction is that Anaheim's commitment to kindness will outlast all of us in this room.

Dalai Lama

As I said earlier, kindness takes hold when we teach it to our children.

No one understands this better than the Dalai Lama.

As you know, he became aware of our kindness campaign a few years ago. He has been very encouraging, for which I'm profoundly grateful.

This past June, the Dalai Lama gave the commencement address at University of California, San Diego.

A few months before that, I approached his emissary, Lama Tenzin Dhonden, to see if the Dalai Lama could come here and talk to our school principals and leaders.

Thankfully, the Dalai Lama said he'd be happy to come. He did this because he knows we are building a city of kindness.

He wanted us to know that creating cultures of kindness and compassion throughout the world is the key to achieving world peace.

He wanted to make sure that we understood that this only happens when we teach kindness and compassion to every generation.

In his remarks, he called Anaheim’s educators and city leaders “captains in this effort.”

He challenged us to always nurture an enduring culture of kindness in our schools.

It was a powerful message.

And today, we’re honored to have a special guest with us: My friend, the Dalai Lama’s Emissary for Peace, Lama Tenzin Dhonden.

We thank you for your kindness in connecting the Dalai Lama to our city.

Freedom

As you all know, businesses, both large and small, are the key to a healthy, productive and thriving city.

Research consistently tells us that up to 70 percent of new jobs are created by small businesses.

Let me repeat that — 70 percent.

We are totally committed to helping entrepreneurs bring their dreams to reality right here in Anaheim.

We need their passion, their innovations, their products — and the jobs they create.

Subsidies

In the past few years, the City Council, over my strenuous objections, has negotiated large subsidies for our biggest businesses.

We know from recent academic research that this approach doesn’t work.

Economic incentives such as these have zero impact on job creation.

Zero impact.

The time has come to deliberately shift our city’s economic strategy for growth from giving government subsidies to large businesses to supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Here’s our new strategy.

We're going to invest in our kids and teach them to be entrepreneurs while at the same time making Anaheim a destination for new businesses to open and thrive.

Mentoring

Just like our kindness campaign, it begins with our kids — specifically our high school kids.

Which is why four years ago, we launched a mentoring program: Anaheim's Innovative Mentoring Experience, better known as AIME.

Every year, businesses set up internships for students, exposing them to the business world.

So far, more than 2,100 Anaheim high school students have gone through the AIME program.

Many have been inspired to pursue college, job training and more apprenticeship experiences.

Recently, the Tesla Foundation, whose mission is to promote the skills needed for young people to succeed in a global economy, was looking for one city in America to test their ideas.

They chose Anaheim because of the Anaheim Union High School District's commitment to teaching their students kindness and character.

Through the AIME program, they'll be showing our kids what it means to innovate and how to do it themselves.

Teaching Future Entrepreneurs

And we aren't stopping there.

This year Anaheim Union High School District is introducing curriculum about entrepreneurialism.

They are teaching students what entrepreneurs do.

Students learn:

- How money and finances work
- What a business plan is and how to set goals

- How to create a collaborative, team-oriented organization.

This curriculum and the AIME program are all about building confidence and inspiring Anaheim's next generation of entrepreneurs.

This is the first leg of our strategy, and here's the second leg.

Freedom City

When these young men and women are ready to bring their new business dream to life, Anaheim's entrepreneurial ecosystem will be there to support them.

I call it Freedom City.

Seven years ago, we created the Regulatory Relief Task Force.

Since then, Anaheim has eliminated more than 75 unneeded and burdensome regulations.

For example, we eliminated the requirement for a conditional-use permit, or CUP, for many small businesses such as pet groomers, dry cleaners, tile businesses, daycare centers, dance studios and more.

Eliminating the requirement for a CUP saves time and money, and more importantly, it gives the entrepreneur a new level of certainty so they can move forward with their business plans.

Business Concierge

We also created a business concierge program, providing a single point of contact to ensure timely action on plan reviews and granting permits.

The concierge makes it much easier to get your project through City Hall.

We're seeing the results all around our city.

Such as the many new industrial businesses popping up in Anaheim Canyon.

And the eateries along Center Street Promenade, including the House of Chimney Cakes run by Hungarian immigrant Szandra Szabó.

And the many wonderful cafes and restaurants found in Little Arabia, such as Maher Nakhal's Le Mirage Pastry.

Brew City

These are great examples of our success.

However, for me, the best example is something we launched a few years ago.

Can you guess what I'm referring to?

That's right — Brew City.

Now don't get me wrong, I like all beers, but by far my favorites are the fabulous craft beers made right here in Anaheim.

There are 15 great craft breweries open today, with about a half-dozen more on the way.

By reducing red tape and making it easier for these small breweries to open, we have truly become Brew City.

Food City

Now, here's what we're doing next.

The task force has turned its attention to bringing regulatory relief to both new and existing restaurants.

Brew City, meet Food City.

We're beginning with a streamlined process called an "express CUP."

The idea is to cut red tape so restaurants can more easily open and begin serving customers.

This isn't only available to new restaurants.

It's also available to any existing restaurant that would like to offer beer and wine with dinner or add outdoor dining.

Anaheim is known for our craft beers.

And now, we're quickly become known for our authentically ethnic cuisine, mom and pop restaurants and hip eateries — all at prices millennials can afford.

The task force is also planning to make the "express CUP" available for many types of businesses, such as auto repair, fitness studios, offices in industrial zones and business schools.

Entrepreneurs have a choice when looking for the best place to open or expand their business.

In most cities, it can take up to six months or even a year to get through all the red tape and finally open.

Here in Anaheim, we're simplifying the process, reducing uncertainty and cutting the cost of doing business, so entrepreneurs choose Anaheim more than any other city.

Econolite

Here's one more thing many residents aren't aware of.

Anaheim is home to one of North America's leading transportation management companies: Econolite.

They're committed to the advancement of connected vehicles and other leading-edge technologies.

Tomorrow, I'll be attending the ribbon cutting at Econolite's new 90,000-square-foot facility.

This is important for us because all over the world, people are experiencing a revolution in mobility, fueled by the advancement of intelligent transportation systems and an emerging network of connected driverless vehicle technologies.

Anaheim has a longstanding partnership with University of California, Irvine, which works with companies like Econolite.

We're working with UCI to further their research into intelligent transportation technologies right here on our streets.

These ideas are changing how city policy leaders look at everyday issues like reducing crashes, parking infrastructure, energy efficiency and alternative transportation technologies.

It's really exciting to imagine the impact of these innovations in the next few years.

Beach Boulevard

I'm also really excited about what's happening with Beach Boulevard.

Here's my vision.

I believe we can create the Sunset Boulevard of Orange County.

Think about the name "Beach Boulevard."

It brings up images of an exciting and memorable drive through Anaheim and all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

We've put together a coalition of all the cities along the route committed to this vision.

Imagine a boulevard that runs from La Habra to the surf of Huntington Beach, with sidewalk dining, eclectic shopping and unique hotels, all with an identifiable brand and a consistent theme.

Our plan is to bring fresh energy and attract new investment with new zoning and regulatory relief.

I know Beach Boulevard will be transformed and we'll bring this vision to life.

All the business growth I've talked about will be fueled by our shift from subsidies to building a 21st-century entrepreneurial ecosystem in Anaheim.

Anaheim is now and will continue to be the best place to open a new business in all of California.

Hands down.

Welcoming Anaheim

There's one more key initiative that will directly impact business development.

I'm noticing something very interesting about who's actually starting many of our new businesses.

They are immigrants and children of immigrants.

Research tells us that one of the best predictors of a city's entrepreneurial growth is the size of the immigrant population.

The bigger this population is, the more likely a city's economy will grow.

We're really lucky here in Anaheim because we have a large immigrant population that gives us an advantage over other cities.

Approximately 150,000 of Anaheim's residents are either foreign born or the children of foreign-born parents. That is 40 percent of our residents.

So, in my view, the next important thing we can do to drive business growth is to bring these great people into the fabric of the city.

We need to ask, "What does Anaheim look like from the eyes of an immigrant?"

"Is Anaheim a welcoming city?"

“Are we kind to people who have come here, often escaping difficult situations in their home countries?”

“Is Anaheim a safe place for immigrants to live, work and bring their dreams to life?”

I think we are, but I think we can do better.

We can be more mindful of their needs.

In October, the City Council overwhelmingly passed a measure officially making Anaheim a “welcoming city.”

This means we’ve committed to creating a system of community integration that encourages all of our schools, churches, businesses — every one of us — to welcome newcomers to Anaheim. To talk to them and get to know them.

It means constantly looking for new ways to empower our immigrants to bring their dreams to life here.

It’s in everyone’s best interest to make this happen.

Ponderosa Park Family Resource Center

I hope you’ve seen that our shift to our neighborhoods is everywhere — from Anna Drive, west Anaheim and Beach Boulevard to Little Arabia and the Anaheim Canyon.

Just look at what’s happened at Ponderosa Park.

In December, a new \$16 million community center opened for residents.

In addition to offering activities for kids and families, the facility is a family resource center where working families can come for help and support.

Ponderosa now plays a big role in the lives of residents, many of whom are first- and second-generation Americans.

Hi Neighbor

In my first year as your mayor, I introduced the Hi Neighbor program to strengthen our community bonds the old-fashioned way — neighbors getting to know neighbors and working together to build their communities.

When we connect with our neighbors, we become safer, better prepared for emergencies and just plain happier.

Seniors

Two years ago, I told you about the German word “mitsein.”

In English it means something like “being with.” This is what Hi Neighbor is all about.

And today, I want to call on all residents to pitch in with a problem that is sad and that we need to confront.

The problem is elderly isolation or, in other words, loneliness.

We know that in every one of our communities there are senior citizens living alone.

This isn't just living alone, it's being alone.

According to SeniorServ, an Anaheim-based senior service nonprofit, 22 percent of Orange County's seniors age 65 and older live alone, compared with the national average of 17 percent.

And 43 percent of older adults in Orange County have reported not having anyone to help them when they experience difficulties.

Some 14,000 residents in long-term care have no friends or family members visiting or actively involved in their care.

Studies show that loneliness is severely harmful to both mental and physical health.

So that's the problem.

What are we going to do about it?

To begin, we're asking all of our residents to show their kindness and:

- Find seniors living alone
- Visit them
- Get to know them
- Listen to their stories
- Become a friend

I know SeniorServ would love for any of you to join their Friendly Visitor program, which provides companionship to homebound seniors.

In the United Kingdom they're doing something similar.

They call their program "door knock" events.

It is simply people going to a neighborhood, actually knocking on the doors of senior citizens' homes and saying, "Hello."

Perhaps we can do the same here.

We're also asking the schools to get involved, connecting students with the elderly through essay contests and visits to long-term care facilities.

And at the end of this year, I propose that we come together as a city and put on a senior festival celebrating all of our elderly neighbors.

At the end of the day, I'm simply asking all of us to step up and say, "Hi," and get to know these wonderful neighbors.

Homelessness

The issue we've been working on the hardest is homelessness.

This has been an issue for American cities for generations.

Some ask me, "Why do we have an anti-camping ordinance?"

Well, our public places belong to all of our residents. They can only be used for their intended purpose.

Our public places are not suitable for camping.

A small percentage of those camping in our parks, along the riverbed or on the streets are criminals who happen to be homeless.

They need to be held accountable.

However, most of these people are not criminals.

We have a duty to reach out to them, to treat them with kindness and to help those who need help.

For many, the issue of homelessness may feel impossible to solve.

But here's where we should be optimistic.

In Orange County, with a population of more than 3 million, there are approximately 5,000 homeless people.

That is only 0.002 percent of us.

It sure seems to me that the 99.98 percent of us who have homes should be able to solve this problem.

We just need to pull together the 34 cities in Orange County and coordinate the efforts of all the nonprofits, faith-based organizations and businesses working on this issue.

Homelessness is the result of a number of factors, including poverty, lack of affordable housing, unemployment, drug addiction, mental illness, family violence and more.

As you know, the county of Orange is working to remove the homeless camped along the Santa Ana River Trail.

Our job is to reach out to these people while also ensuring that our parks and libraries are safe and used for their intended purpose.

Here's what Anaheim has done so far.

In 2014, we announced Coming Home Anaheim, a comprehensive plan to address homelessness.

The city's job is to effectively coordinate the efforts of the literally thousands of people reaching out to the homeless.

We do this through our partner City Net and the Anaheim Homeless Collaborative, a group made up of over 100 churches, nonprofits and community groups.

To date, they have helped transition 960 people off the streets of Anaheim and into long-term housing or reunited with family.

This is no small accomplishment.

The homeless issue is really complicated.

Each of these 960 people is an individual with their own unique circumstances.

Here's just one example.

In 2014, unable to work due to a disability, Teresa ended up living by herself in her car.

She basically had nothing.

City Net case managers heard about her. With the help of two local churches and other volunteers, they made sure Teresa had food and clothing.

Then Mercy House and the Illumination Foundation joined the effort, successfully getting her into safe transitional housing at Grandma's House of Hope's emergency shelter.

Now she is in permanent supportive housing and she's doing well.

Teresa is with us today.

She's here representing all the 960 people City Net and their many partners have helped to date.

Let me be clear.

To get Teresa out of her car and into permanent housing, it took City Net, the Homeless Collaborative, two churches, Mercy House, the Illumination Foundation and Grandma's House of Hope.

Homelessness is a complicated issue, but our community is making headway.

Here's how I know.

Of these 960 people, 883 are still housed today. That is 92 percent.

And there's more good news.

Under the leadership of the City Council, Anaheim is host city for the county of Orange's Bridges at Kraemer Place.

Since opening in May 2017, the shelter has helped scores of people by providing immediate shelter and transitional services to break the cycle of homelessness.

This summer, they are set to open the second phase of Bridges at the Kraemer Place shelter, providing an additional 100 beds.

Jobs

In addition, Anaheim is effectively tackling the job issue.

It begins with our new program, Better Way Anaheim.

The program, launched in December, is essentially a volunteer program offering simple but real job experience for the homeless.

We all know the powerful impact a job has on a person's dignity and confidence.

This year, we're preparing to partner with Chrysalis, a cutting-edge organization dedicated to getting the homeless into good, paying jobs.

Chrysalis actually hires the individuals themselves and then a company hires Chrysalis.

This reduces the hiring risk for a company that wants to give a homeless person a job and a chance at a new life.

We look forward to them being up and running in Anaheim this fall.

There is no city doing more than Anaheim to effectively tackle the issue of homelessness.

I want to thank City Net, the Homeless Collaborative, our city employees and Anaheim Police for their extraordinary work.

Drug Addiction

Drug addiction is an issue, not simply for the homeless, but for people throughout Anaheim.

In 2016, we announced Drug Free Anaheim.

It's simple, but revolutionary.

Any addict who is looking to get well can go to any police station and ask for help. The police will connect them with a drug recovery program.

So far, more than 225 people have taken part in this program.

One young man, Brian, had been struggling with addiction for years.

A friend stepped in and contacted the police, who were able to get him into Anaheim Lighthouse for treatment.

Today, Brian attends Celebrate Recovery meetings and works at both Rapid Manufacturing and P.F. Chang's.

He's even counseling other recovering addicts.

This past Friday, Brian marked nine months of sobriety — and he joins us today.

State of the City

I'm an optimistic man.

Every year I have given the State of the City address, I've said something like, "I've never been more optimistic about our city's future."

And I've always meant it.

This year, what makes me so certain that we are becoming the great city we imagined is the incredible progress we've made together on all fronts:

- Difficult issues like fighting crime, reducing homelessness and addressing drug addiction
- Costly issues like infrastructure, reinvigorating depressed neighborhoods, building parks and good roads
- Creating real, lasting opportunities for businesses of all sizes to grow and prosper
- And, most important, building a culture of kindness

I'm honored to be your mayor.

The people of Anaheim inspire me every day.

I will continue to engage with you and all our residents, encouraging everyone to actively participate in making Anaheim the best place in America to live.

And I'm going to say it again.

I've truly never been more optimistic about our city's future.

Thank you, and God bless the city of Anaheim.