



MAYOR HARRY SIDHU
State of the City
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Welcome back Anaheim. We are back!

It has been two long years since we met like this.

In that time, our city has faced the greatest challenge of our lifetime. And maybe the greatest challenge ever.

A lot has happened.

But for any city to have endured the pandemic, the economic shutdown, the closure of schools and the social isolation, yet still emerge with a future so bright, it is clear for all to see that the state of our city is strong!

Disneyland is once again a place of hope and joy.

Fans are back at Angel Stadium of Anaheim.

Concerts are returning to Honda Center.

In just a few days, our convention center will host an amazing, immersive Van Gogh exhibit, the first large event in a year at the Anaheim Convention Center.

That will be followed by more than 30 events through the end of the year.

And, in early 2022, we will see the return of NAMM, our greatest show.

And right here at the City National Grove of Anaheim, we are proud to be the first indoor event in more than a year.

Like so many, the Grove closed 16 months ago to the day.

But they kept going with great drive-in concerts.

And today, you are the first to be back inside this theater. Give yourself a round of applause.

Living Through History

It is hard to see history as you live through it.

But, without a doubt, we have lived through history.

Never before have we seen our largest businesses closed for more than a year.

Never before have we seen 30,000 Anaheim residents out of work.

Not during the Great Recession. Not after Sept. 11, 2001.

In the greatest cost of all, we have lost 900 Anaheim residents to the pandemic.

While today is a day of celebration, I want to take a moment and honor those lost to COVID-19, and to pay our respects to those who have lost someone dear to them.

Please join me in a brief moment of silence.

Unprecedented Response

Make no mistake. It is no accident that Anaheim is back.

Our city has played a leading role fighting coronavirus.

We have provided more than \$65 million in:

- Rent assistance
- Help with utility bills
- Food for families
- Business grants
- Face masks for residents and restaurants
- And internet access for remote learning.

We hosted Orange County's largest testing site at the Anaheim Convention Center, testing more than 125,000 people.

And we brought testing right to our neighborhoods with community clinics.

In the greatest triumph of the pandemic, we played a leading role in the vaccination of Anaheim and Orange County.

In all, more than 500,000 people in Anaheim and Orange County have been vaccinated in our city, first at our fire facility, then at the Disneyland Resort and then at the Anaheim Convention Center.

With these sites, we vaccinated nearly 60 percent of our city, and gotten nearly 70 percent to at least one shot on their way to full vaccination.

We knew large sites would play a critical role in vaccinating our city.

But many in our community had challenges getting to these sites.

That is why some of the most important shots have been given in our neighborhoods.

We have run more than 40 neighborhood clinics, and brought shots to doorsteps with our neighborhood outreach.

We have given more than 6,000 shots in our neighborhoods.

While smaller in number, these shots may have never happened without our outreach.

Anaheim's Golden Age

Anaheim is a city of strength.

We are a city of hopes and dreams.

This is where Walt Disney's vision came to life.

Anaheim is where Carl Karcher built a restaurant empire.

It is where the Gonzalez family came from Mexico and created a beloved grocery chain.

It is where Gene Autry made baseball an Anaheim tradition.

And where the Van Doren brothers created the world's most famous skateboard shoe.

These visionaries were part of Anaheim's golden age.

They were part of a national recovery from World War II and the Great Depression before that.

As mayor, I embrace the legacy of Anaheim's golden age.

My vision is empowering the American Dream.

It means embracing bold thinking — the same bold thinking that made Anaheim what it is today.

Like so many, Anaheim is my adopted home.

In case you didn't notice, I'm from India. I never had an accent until I came here!

I came to this country in 1974 with \$6 in my pocket. I worked as a janitor to put myself through college.

In so many ways, I have lived the American dream. From a humble start, I went to work in aerospace. I later started my own family business.

Anaheim has been a big part of my American Dream. I am not alone.

I am one of three City Council members who are immigrants, along with Council Member Jose Diaz and Council Member Jose Moreno.

A fourth, Council Member Avelino Valencia, is the son of recent immigrants.

So many have come to our city to pursue their American dream.

It isn't always easy.

But our role as a city is to offer a place where opportunity can thrive.

New Anaheim Golden Age

To create opportunity for a new generation, we must embrace a new golden age for Anaheim.

From the ashes of crisis, our city is entering its biggest expansion in decades.

In years to come, the area around Angel Stadium and Honda Center will come to life with shopping, dining, entertainment, parks and new homes.

The Anaheim Resort will reinvent itself once again with a mix of entertainment, hotels, dining, shopping and new attractions at the theme parks of the Disneyland Resort.

In west Anaheim, we will see Beach Boulevard transformed with new residents, public spaces and walkable streets.

And there are proposals for even more investment in Anaheim, such as Katella Gateway.

Investment that could bring new homes, including a substantial commitment to affordable housing, as well as new hotels.

Benefiting Neighborhoods

These big changes will make headlines.

But in this next Golden Age of Anaheim, every Anaheim neighborhood will see life-changing improvements, for every resident, every family, every street.

Those who came before us built the Anaheim we know today.

It now rests with us, to build the Anaheim of tomorrow.

I have asked the Angels, Honda Center and Disney to share with us ...

The role they will play in Anaheim's recovery, and what our city's bright future looks like.

First, join me as we hear from the Angels (Angels video plays).

As you can see, the stadium has great potential.

I want to thank Arte Moreno and wife Carole for their commitment to Anaheim.

You may have read about how we continue to work through the process with our state partners.

This project will bring excitement to Anaheim. But it is more than that.

It will be the largest expansion of affordable housing in our city's history.

I want everyone to know, whatever it takes, I will make our vision for the stadium a reality.

Right next door, we are fortunate to have the Samuelis as part of our community.

During the pandemic, they hosted some of our largest food drives and helped us serve our neighborhoods.

When it came time to vote in 2020, Honda Center stepped up as a voting center.

Now big things are in store around Honda Center, as you will see here (Honda Center video plays).

Anaheim has something no other city has, Walt Disney's original theme park.

Disneyland has been part of our history for more than 65 years.

The past year was the most challenging in our history.

But, as you will see here, we are moving forward together and looking to a new era of growth in the Anaheim Resort (Disneyland Resort video plays).

You can see why the future of Anaheim is so bright.

We have billions of dollars in investment coming to our city.

It will generate revenue for decades to come and serve generations of Anaheim residents.

We are proud of Anaheim's visitor economy.

Our theme parks, sports and entertainment bring joy to millions of people.

But they also provide jobs and support families.

Revenue from visitors serves our neighborhoods.

That has always been the Anaheim model: A visitor economy that supports neighborhoods.

As we start this new golden age for Anaheim, our neighborhoods must benefit.

As mayor, I have pledged to put Anaheim first.

And to reinvest in our neighborhoods.

Revenue from new development, will help us make life better in Anaheim.

It is already starting.

In west Anaheim, change is happening now.

At Beach Boulevard and Lincoln Avenue, homes are going up. Next will be a shopping center and community spaces.

In the next few years, development will move south down Beach Boulevard, with new homes, shops and affordable apartments.

In all, we and our partners will redevelop a half a mile of Beach Boulevard.

Of course, there is more work to do.

There are still too many motels and strip malls.

For owners looking to improve their properties, we welcome you to come along with us.

To investors and developers looking for the next opportunity in Anaheim, we invite you to join us.

You have seen what we have done in the Anaheim Resort, in the Platinum Triangle and in downtown Anaheim.

Now it is west Anaheim's turn.

As we make Beach Boulevard better, the neighborhoods of west Anaheim will get better.

And that is just the start.

We are looking to improve neighborhoods across our city, along Euclid Street, along State College Boulevard, near our parks and at our shopping centers.

Anaheim's second golden age will touch every part of our city.

Addressing Homelessness

Improving our neighborhoods also means addressing homelessness.

We are proud to be a leader with our compassionate and responsive approach.

There are two tragedies of homelessness.

One is the tragedy of life on the street.

The second is the loss of streets, parks and other public spaces that were never meant to be places to live.

We have led Orange County in opening shelters and in clearing encampments in a caring way.

Now we are leading in new ways, including how we respond to homelessness.

When there is a public safety issue, our police will respond.

But now other times, a team of social workers will respond.

Anaheim's Community Care Response Team works morning to night, seven days a week, with a dedicated call center for residents and businesses.

Team members offer shelter and services to get someone off the street and to provide a lasting solution to homelessness in our city.

We are also moving forward on the next generation of shelter in our city.

Since 2018, I have overseen the opening of four temporary and longer-term shelters.

Going forward, we are partnering with the Salvation Army on Center of Hope.

It will provide everything from emergency shelter to jobs and supportive housing.

The vast majority of this \$38 million project will be funded by grants, tax credits and donations.

The benefit it will provide to our city will be invaluable.

Moving Forward

As I noted, it is hard to see current events in the context of history.

Our mission in the months and years ahead is to define the next chapter of our history.

To ensure that every Anaheim resident knows that they are living in the best of times.

As we move on from the challenges of the past year we will do so together, in opportunity and prosperity and into Anaheim's new golden age.

Thank you.

May God bless America.

And God bless Anaheim.