

State of the City Address, Mayor Pete Buttigieg

Remarks as prepared for delivery

February 12, 2014

Thank you, Council President Davis. Thank you Pastor Miller and the terrific students from Clay High School here tonight. Thank you to my outstanding staff and that of the Century Center for pulling this evening together. And thank you to everyone gathered here for your donations to charity and for your interest in the State of our City.

Members of the Common Council, Clerk John Voorde, residents of our great city and honored guests:

Tonight we are gathered on the birthday of America's greatest president, Abraham Lincoln. Everyone who has ever faced a challenge has something to learn from Lincoln, this self-taught, back-country lawyer, raised in Indiana, who came to guide our nation through its greatest and most dreadful national trial. Through leadership, determination, prudence, and an unyielding commitment to liberty and justice, Lincoln held our nation together, and made possible the era in which America came to lead the world.

To read Lincoln's words closely is to be reminded that in his time, there was no certainty that America would last at all. His famous Gettysburg Address said it was the outcome of the war that would answer the question of whether the "nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure."

That question was settled the next year, the last year of Lincoln's life, 1865, also the year in which South Bend as we know her was officially established. There must have been great uncertainty here too, over whether this City would grow and prosper. Optimistic though they were, our forebears must have wondered if this venture of theirs would be remembered as a failed project or an enduring foundation.

Indeed, 98 years later, with the loss of Studebaker, many believed that South Bend was finished, that it would be remembered as a city that rose and fell, a community that had come and gone. Yet today, nearly 150 years after this beginning and after Lincoln, the state of our city is growing stronger by the day, and our future is bright.

Our forebears, living in the days of Lincoln, could scarcely imagine the progress we have made, from the most fundamental achievements in sanitation to the astonishing gifts of personal technology. They would be amazed to see that clean, safe drinking water could be piped into every home in the community, or to watch an airplane take off from our airport. Their faith in progress and growth would be vindicated beyond their dreams by the modern face of our city.

But if they could walk our streets today, they would also recognize our unfinished business. They would know poverty when they saw it, and recognize that more must be done to give everyone a chance to thrive. They would recognize the pain caused by

violent crime, and see that work must remain in order to quell it. They would see that some of our homes are gleaming, beautiful, while others are decrepit and abandoned. And they would ask what we were doing to make life in this place better, to advance the hope of a more perfect community.

Thinking about how we advance that hope calls to mind an observation that Lincoln made once, in words far less famous than anything in the Gettysburg address. In 1858 he said this:

“Beavers build houses; but they build them in nowise differently, or better now, than they did, five thousand years ago. Ants, and honey-bees, provide food for winter; but just in the same way they did, when Solomon referred the sluggard to them as patterns of prudence. Man is not the only animal who labors; but he is the only one who improves his workmanship.”

Tonight, rather than take you one department at a time through the many activities and achievements of your city government, I would like to share how we are improving our workmanship, how this administration looks at tasks that are as necessary now as they were in the first cities five thousand years ago, but that must be done in new and better ways in order for us to secure a better future with the resources that we have. I will focus on how we are doing business in this city—our way forward and our approach—and show you the results along the way.

We are defined not just by what we must do but how we choose to do it. Our strategy has been characterized by six principles that run across our work: partnerships, customer service, innovation, inclusion and transparency, believing in our team, and recognizing community as capacity.

By sticking to these principles in everything we do, we can deliver change that endures, long beyond one mayor or one council or one administration.

Partnerships

The first and most important of our strategies is to form lasting partnerships that help us to achieve common goals. Internal and external, new and renewed, these partnerships have enriched life for residents in this City and brought us nearer to our many bold goals, while thickening the bonds that hold our community together. Spend even one day on the 14th floor, and you learn quickly that we cannot deliver anything unless we have partners at our side.

We cannot deliver a more technologically capable city unless we partner with the best technology minds in the country, bringing them to our city and sharing our discoveries with them. That’s why we joined with local private and nonprofit leaders to bring a national civic technology organization called Code for America to South Bend to develop new applications to better serve residents. The young IT professionals embedded with our city helped unlock a true civic technology community right here in South Bend, and delivered applications like CityVoice, a program that gives residents a new way to be

heard when deciding what to do with vacant and abandoned homes in their neighborhoods. That application is already being adapted for new uses and has won international accolades, and meanwhile the local civic groups galvanized by their work with Code for America continue to improve our city. It's just one example of what we are doing to create a lasting set of partnerships that position our community at the cutting edge of civic innovation.

We cannot deliver a safer city unless we are partnering with one another and with those who have fought the same fight elsewhere. That's why last year, I announced that South Bend would be joining the National Network for Safe Communities, and convened an Anti-Violence Commission to bring together community leaders. Now the community is underway in delivering a new strategy, rooted in cooperation everywhere from the United States Attorney's office to Mamas Against Violence, from social services like Goodwill to the County Prosecutor and Police Department. Together we have taken a stand against the violence that shocked our community in 2012, and together we are moving forward to deliver results. Our community is encouraged by the 50 percent drop in homicides last year compared to 2012, but nine homicides city-wide in one year is still nine too many, and it is as urgent as ever to identify and apply the most effective strategies known to address this problem. This is not a program or a project, it's a strategy that we must adopt and maintain long after the tenure of any one police chief, any one prosecutor, any one pastor, or any one mayor. It's about weaving a better way of handling violence into the very DNA of how our city protects residents.

We cannot deliver great neighborhoods unless we partner with all the different public and private actors who decide the fate of vacant and abandoned homes. Partnerships are at the heart of our community's effort to address a thousand homes in a thousand days with the right mix of rehabilitation where possible, demolition where necessary. Carrying out the vision of the Task Force on Vacant and Abandoned Property, we are partnering with business and nonprofit leaders in the community, as well as state and federal government, to unlock resources that can help.

Today, there are 140 fewer vacant and abandoned homes than there were when we started keeping score, and most of these were addressed through repair instead of demolition. Another 207 homes are under contract for action as weather and conditions allow. Meanwhile, we will partner with nonprofits to pilot a deconstruction program that trains underemployed residents in skills useful for jobs in construction-related industries, building up their chances of future employment while they help us address these houses. And we continue to work to prevent homes from being lost to vacancy in the first place with our housing counseling, helping 166 residents maintain or discover suitable housing last year alone.

We cannot deliver a robust and future-oriented city unless we partner with our universities on issues like economic development and confronting brain drain. For example, working with the University of Notre Dame and now with help from the Lilly Foundation, the enFocus program retains talented graduates in science, technology, and entrepreneurship, to work with our community on issues benefiting us all. One project

alone could save the city over a million dollars by finding better ways to manage our vehicle fleet, and enFocus is just getting started. Meanwhile MBA students conducted projects on ways to market the city, and engineering students are helping us clean up Bowman Creek. This kind of engagement is more than a series of programs, and more than the sum of its parts. It's a chance to permanently change the culture of how we interact with students so that being involved in the city around you is viewed as a basic part of education in any of our five universities.

We cannot deliver a well-equipped workforce unless we find partners in regional economic growth from both the public and private sector, and we are working to do just that. Last year the Department of Community Investment, often working with state and county counterparts, had a hand in creating and retaining hundreds of jobs. It's one of the main reasons why our unemployment rate has fallen to 8.7 percent. That rate is far too high, but when I took office in 2012, it stood at 12 percent. We believe the single most powerful tool for driving that rate down further is workforce readiness. That's why we are working with local business, the Chamber, the regional WorkOne office and Ivy Tech, and for the first time on a project like this, our neighboring city of Mishawaka, to launch the SMART program. SMART stands for Supporting Manufacturers and Regional Talent, and uses an employer-led curriculum to train and place up to 48 residents at work in the manufacturing economy. Economic development means more than real estate, it means investing in our human capital and giving people the skills to succeed in this economy.

And we cannot deliver a well-governed community unless we partner within the ranks of elected officials in local government. The administration's most important partner in getting things done for our city is the Common Council. With legislation addressing safety, quality of life, housing, and more, the Council has worked with us to create a legislative and budgetary framework to better serve our residents. I especially want to thank the Council for the months of hard work, collaboration, dialogue, and give-and-take that led to the 2014 budget, one that tackles our community's priorities and balances the general fund, all while operating in a reduced-revenue reality. It's part of why this year, our city was again awarded a rare AA rating on our credit by S&P. This puts us among the very best—in fact, no Class Two city in the entire state has a better bond rating than we do.

Customer service

In addition to partnerships, the second way we improve our workmanship is by focusing on customer service. Every government process looks different when you look at it from the customer's eyes, and by taking that perspective we have found new and better ways to serve.

For example, the way we handle phone calls looks different when you see it through the eyes of a customer, asking yourself: what's it like to be a resident trying to get answers from the city, and how can we make it easier? That's why we set up 311, which was in its first weeks of operation when I last gave a State of the City address. Today the operators have taken over 100,000 calls, streamlining our responsiveness on issues ranging from

water bill collection to parking restrictions, and providing vital data that we use to improve services. As this becomes built into how we fix things in this city, it will be about a lot more than the one number or the call center. It will represent a permanent change in how we relate to residents as customers, always looking for better ways to respond to their needs.

Similarly, our business assistance process looks different when you view it through the eyes of a potential investor, sizing up our city. Consider the tax abatement form, a process designed to entice businesses to come or grow here. Abatements exist as a way to put out an economic welcome mat to responsible businesses interested in improving our community with good jobs. But until last year, applicants were confronted with an 18-page essay test, threatening to send the opposite message of a welcome. Our economic development team studied the paperwork and figured out a way to reduce that to two double-sided sheets of paper, while still gathering the information needed to conform to our city's existing policy on abatements. It's the same thinking that led us to establish a single point of contact in the Department of Community Investment, someone to navigate the overlapping processes of zoning, utilities, and taxes so the customer doesn't have to. Already we have served dozens of businesses and resolved countless issues in this way. It's an example of how we can constantly review every process in this city, not from the perspective of government but from the perspective of what it is like to deal with the government—and how we can be easier to work with.

Innovation

The third way we improve our workmanship is to celebrate innovation, to realize that there is always more than one way to do everything we do, and actively look for the best way. The basic obligations of a city, like sanitation and safety, have been more or less the same since the days of Solomon. But we should never rest easy with the ways we do this, especially if there is a chance to save resources or make our services better. Across the city, this culture of doing the same things in new ways is taking hold and making residents better off.

For example, there's more than one way to pick up trash, and our new smart garbage trucks use robotic arms, that let one operator to do what used to take a three-man crew. Even the bins are smart, using new RFID chips that will soon make it possible for us to detect in real time if a house is missed, reducing the need for missed collection runs so that our dollars and manpower can be used elsewhere. There's also more than one way to power those trucks. The new vehicles run on compressed natural gas, or CNG, filling up for the equivalent of \$.73 per gallon and making us a more sustainable city.

There's more than one way to find out where crime is happening in our neighborhoods, which is why we're using new tactics and technologies to keep this city safe. Acoustic sensing technology like Shotspotter helps our police to track violent incidents, pinpointing a problem before 911 even gets the call.

There's more than one way to light up a building, warm it up or cool it down, and our municipal energy office has become a regional leader in energy innovation. By using

different energy technologies, we have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars for taxpayers, with more to come.

There's more than one way to pay our bills, and taking new approaches to our finances has saved taxpayers millions. Our Administration and Finance department has come up with ways to take advantage of changes in the bond markets and re-finance our city's obligations, and this approach has saved our city over a million dollars, just on the bonds for the Century Center alone.

There's even more than one way to run a zoo, and this year we launch a new partnership with the Potawatomi Zoological Society, a great example of a public-private partnership with the potential to provide more great experiences to residents while saving taxpayer dollars. Thanks to the support of the Society, the Parks Board, and Common Council, this partnership came together in time for the new year. Today's news about a red panda exhibit is just the first of many great new things in store for our Zoo.

And of course, there is more than one way for traffic to move in our downtown area. When we saw evidence that two-way streets lead to business and job growth in downtowns across America, we asked, why shouldn't South Bend have that? By the time it gets cold again in the fall, work will be complete on Lafayette and William streets downtown as well as Jefferson Boulevard, not only restoring the two-way traffic pattern that served South Bend well in another era, but making needed streetscape improvements and moving toward more complete streets that are friendly to bicycles and pedestrians, as well as cars and trucks. The timing couldn't be better as downtown re-emerges to take its place as everybody's neighborhood. Everything from art to sushi, home beer brewing equipment to a scarf or even a guitar made right here in South Bend, can be purchased within walking distance from where we gather tonight. People are choosing to live, work, and socialize downtown at levels not seen in decades.

More than technology or a series of initiatives, this is a way of doing business. It's about always looking at different ways to do the things we do, welcoming innovation and questioning habit so we can meet our enduring obligations in new ways that make more sense and cost less for everyone involved.

Inclusion and transparency

The fourth guiding principle for improving our workmanship is inclusion and transparency. We exist to serve every resident, and all residents deserve to be able to observe and shape the workings of their government.

Serving every resident means all residents deserve access to the information we create on their behalf. That's why we became Indiana's first government to have an Open Data Policy, using technology to make our government more accountable to the residents who pay the bills and on whose behalf it is created. Today data.southbend.in.gov provides residents with information on everything from vacant houses to employee salaries, and we are adding to it as we go forward. The same principle guides our legal department in making sure we live up to the strict requirements of the Access to Public Records Act.

Last year alone our Department of Law processed over 2,300 requests for information under those state transparency guidelines, with fewer than half a dozen complaints and zero violations. It's an incredible batting average, and it reflects a team working hard to do the right thing with public information.

Serving every resident means all residents deserve a chance to give senior leadership a piece of their mind. Our Mayor's Night Out program allows residents in every corner of the city direct access to the top levels of government, so any resident in this community can command the undivided attention of the mayor. Together with council members and department leaders, I have participated in 19 of these events and sat down with 472 residents since implementing the program.

Serving every resident means all residents deserve an administration that looks like the community we serve. In identifying community leaders to serve on key boards and commissions, diversity has been a priority. It also means our city should do business with a diverse range of local small businesses. That's why we've hired a diversity purchasing officer, and hosted trainings on city quoting and bidding requirements to demystify the process and tear down barriers to doing business with the city so that more diverse businesses are included. At the same time, there is more work to do in order to make sure all parts of this government reflect the community we serve, including more police and fire personnel who reflect the diverse backgrounds of our city, and I echo our police and fire chiefs in asking for the community's help in encouraging talented minorities and women to apply for openings in our administration.

Serving every resident means all residents deserve a process that takes their voice on board when major investments are planned. That's why new initiatives like the West Side Corridor plan, addressing Lincoln Way West and Western Avenues, are people-powered. After the Common Council authorized this program, we began to gather stakeholders from the area to launch a neighborhood-driven approach and make sure resources go where they can make the most difference. Already, valuable input is coming this way, not all from outside experts or from the top down, but from the people who live and work in the affected areas.

Serving every resident means including all residents even if they're not old enough to vote. That's why we are creating a Youth Task Force, and empowering the youth not only to bring their ideas but to help set their own mission and then complete a project around it later this year.

And it means serving residents no matter their country of origin, one reason we have made sure that 311 offers bilingual service.

The idea of inclusion is deeper than the number of disclosures or hires we make, bigger than any program or project, bigger than any one minority or group, it's about changing the relationship we as residents have to government—because it is our government, and no one should feel left out.

Our team

The fifth principle for improving our workmanship is to believe in our team. Winter is a good time to think about how extraordinary and hard working our team is. When you hear the sound of a snow plow go by at four in the morning, that's a city employee making our streets safer. When you call 311 for answers on snow emergency parking, that's a city employee working to connect you to your government. When you turn on your water in the morning and feel it go from cold to hot, there's a city employee who made sure it got out of a well and into your faucet. And if you have an accident while driving and have to call 911, those are city police and fire personnel rushing to help you in the cold. Without the thousand-plus people of our City team, none of the things we take for granted in our daily lives would be possible. Believing in our team means empowering them to do things in new ways.

Believing in our team means equipping them with the technology it takes to succeed—and the skills to use that technology. That's why this week I have approved a new IT strategy for our city administration. This strategy, which will be made publicly available online, charts a course for our administration and employees to get on the cutting edge, and stay there.

Believing in our team means expecting them to do new things and supporting them when they try. When the state notified us of an issue requiring us to perform extra asbestos inspections, the potential taxpayer cost was enormous and the result would have been to cut the number of vacant and abandoned houses we could address with our fixed budget. But our code inspectors stepped up and became certified to do the inspections themselves, saving taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars and accelerating our progress in relieving residents of blighted homes on their blocks.

Believing in our team means sharing the rewards of performance improvement with employees. That's why last year's successful contract negotiation with our Teamsters included a performance bonus to encourage management and employees to collaborate to improve safety, quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in city operations—and reward workers when they succeed.

And believing in our team means encouraging and empowering them to work across departments and reach out to others. One of the most moving experiences I had last year involved two departments you might not think of in the same category: animal control, and Police. Acting on the initiative of a young police officer and an animal control staff member, together with several volunteer groups and the Juvenile Justice Center, Project HEAL was created. The program pairs juvenile detainees with animals that are considered unadoptable due to behavior issues. The kids learn how to train the dogs, and by resolving the dogs' behavior issues, they make them adoptable and help save the animals' lives. I went to the first graduation and I wish everyone in this room could have been there to see it. To see those kids realize they were needed, to see them stand up taller and take pride in the ability to bring something unexpected out of these animals, to see their faces and their futures grow brighter, shows what is possible when you refuse to give up on a child—but it also showed what proactive employees can achieve in this city.

Beyond any number of initiatives or projects, this is the way we do business, a change in what it means to be a city employee, a more demanding but also more rewarding workplace that invites everyone who serves here to come into work with ideas to make this a better place.

Community as capacity

The sixth and final principle has a lot to do with the first. To improve our workmanship, we need to not only drive partnerships but to look to the community to get things done—to see community as capacity. Government doesn't have to do it all. We don't have to solve every problem if we can empower people to be part of the solution. And South Bend is the kind of community where people step up and answer the call before it even goes out. There are so many examples that I can only mention a few.

But take the example of Unity Gardens, which has deeply enriched our residents' relationships to food and to each other in a few short years of existence. This year their "Honey from the Hood" cultivated in neighborhood gardens right here in our community went to a taste test competition for the first time—and took home national honors.

Take the Ignite Michiana program, which lit up the reinvigorated State Theater on more than one occasion with dozens of fascinating and exciting sessions led by the people of our community sharing their passions with an audience of hundreds.

Or the example of mentorship in this community, with more than 100 new mentors joining the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, and another 80 stepping up to join the Education Foundation mentoring program in our schools, all to give more young people in this city a shot at success and moving us nearer our goal to double the number of mentor relationships in this city.

Look at the bridge over Michigan Street at the northern approach to downtown, an eyesore for years which has been transformed, thanks to the work of 963 different volunteers who put in over 9,000 hours to make our city a better place.

The enormous things that can be achieved by community members stepping up represent the best in our city, and they add up to something bigger than all our volunteers put together. It's what we should come to expect in a community where residents understand that the city is what they make it, and that they can be the change they would like to see in our neighborhoods, our downtown, our hometown.

Through these six principles, we as a community have improved our workmanship in the art of self-government, that radical experiment of empowering people to craft their own destiny makes America what it is, an experiment whose salvation at the end of the Civil War coincided with the emergence of South Bend as a City.

And it's working. Talking to people in every part of this city, you can feel the growing confidence that we are gaining ground. And having traveled this country from coast to

coast, telling our story, gathering ideas, and recruiting allies in the effort to make South Bend all it can be, I can tell you our stock in the outside world is rising fast. People are rooting for South Bend, outside our city limits and right here at home. You can feel it.

A year ago, I said that 2013 would be a year of action. It has, and the coming year must be one too. There is no time to lose in delivering on the priorities that the administration, the Council, and the community have set into motion, and we know we have our work cut out for us. To truly deliver on priorities like neighborhood public safety, improved housing, and a thriving economy in every part of our city, we will need to be as disciplined and energetic as ever.

Plenty of new challenges are coming our way. The rising cost of health care will put pressure on our City budget and must be addressed. Fluctuations in assessed value, and a tax reform process in Indianapolis with uncertain outcomes, could further constrain our revenues in the years ahead. Meanwhile, the need for our community to provide first-rate services and a great quality of life will only grow.

But I have no doubt that we will rise and meet these challenges. For all the programs and projects, the facts and figures, for all the measures we keep score of, the most important thing we have witnessed in recent years is that this City has come to believe in itself again. That's why our timing could not be better, as next year marks the 150th anniversary of modern South Bend's incorporation. Our hometown has a big birthday coming up, and there's no better timing to celebrate and mark her accelerating comeback.

Shortly we will announce the formation of a number of committees to build and support this civic celebration. In doing so, we will rely on the concept of community as capacity, and the city administration will seek to facilitate the many ways in which this community can celebrate itself and consolidate the awareness that we are coming back. Let's show ourselves, and the world, how South Bend is doing after 150 years on the map. Let's show what 150 years of hard work, leadership, determination and energy have built. The celebration will be a yearlong, lasting through 2015, which means we will have a lot of work to do getting ready in 2014.

On a personal note, I would like to thank the community for your support since I received orders to spend part of this year on deployment in Afghanistan. With just a few days remaining before that begins, I could not be more confident that the City will remain in good hands during my absence.

Many have asked how to help during the time I am away and have offered their prayers. While I gratefully accept those kind wishes, I would ask that no one think of or pray for me without extending those thoughts and prayers to the many thousands of other service members who are there right now, and the millions of veterans who have returned home after serving our great country. By joining the military they signed up to go to places like Vietnam and Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan, in order to protect places like South Bend. Many of them have deployed several times, sometimes going on back to back tours. All of them deserve our thanks. And I would like to ask every military member, reservist,

guardsman, and every veteran in this room to stand up for a moment and be thanked by a grateful city.

Every department in the administration knows my expectations for continued progress and success, and our incoming Deputy Mayor, Mark Neal, will be a superb leader for the administration and the community during my time away. With the minor exception of some home improvement projects waiting for me at my house, nothing underway in this City will stop or pause during the next seven months, and I know I will return home to an improved administration and an even stronger community. I also fully expect to come home a better mayor because of my time in service.

I will miss a lot of things about our city, especially the way this place is in the spring and summer, the Silver Hawks games and block parties, Sunburst and the Urban Adventure, going running along our great river and catching up with friends over a burger or a taco in one of our great restaurants. But what I'll miss most and be most eager to come home to are the people who make this city what it is. Whether it's the plow driver you meet at the streets garage who refuses to complain to you even though you can see how tired he is from thirty straight days of snow removal mostly on 12-hour rotations, or the father on the West Side who organizes a soccer league that draws hundreds of kids every weekend to LaSalle Park in the summer time. Whether it's the supervisor of the County-City building's cleaning crew who collects the tabs off pop cans to help fund birthday pizza dinners for her crew that keeps our building looking good, or the business leader who beams with pride at the construction of a new school but doesn't want you to know he's one of the ones who paid for it. Whether it's the young man working at a coffee shop here downtown who can't wait to turn 21 and apply to our police department, or the fifth grader who comes to a Mayor's Night Out and shows me his plan to improve a city park, or the community activist three times my age who walked into my office and convinced me to join a cause that matters to her. You are South Bend, and your way of putting others first makes our city what it is. I would be proud to even visit a city made up of people like you, let alone to lead it.

As we come to a close this evening, I would return once more to the words of Abraham Lincoln, who said "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me." He was too modest—in fact there was some of both. Much was out of his control, but he did everything within his power to hold our country together, and in so doing, helped decide the course of history.

And so it is for us: we must be patient about the things we cannot control, but we must have urgency in addressing those things that we can.

We are out to confront problems that go back to the days of our City's founding, back to the days of Lincoln and before, and indeed back to the days of Solomon—issues like protecting one person from the violence of another, or growing the ability of an economy to provide prosperity for all, or meeting the need for housing and neighborhoods that lift all of us up and not just some of us. To meet these challenges we must have the urgency to sense that action is imperative, but also the patience to see everything we do through to

a result, a permanent improvement—to establish enduring change beyond any number of projects or programs.

There are the things we control, and the things we do not. As we have been reminded the hard way lately, we cannot control the weather, but we do control how well we take care of our homes and take care of one another when conditions grow harsh. We shovel out our cars and our neighbors' too, if they need help.

We cannot control what's happening in the national economy, but we control how hard we work and what skills we can bring to the table for a better chance to succeed.

Above all, we cannot control each other, which is exactly what makes politics so challenging. But we all govern ourselves. It is helpful to think about that, any time the effectiveness, tone, or tenor of our political process comes under strain. Each of us decides how to respond to one another's words and actions. And guided by what Lincoln called the better angels of our nature, we are at our best when we exercise that self-government wisely, when we are slow to take offense and loath to stir up animosity, when we recognize that there are not good and bad people but good and bad sides to us all, and that in all humility we ought to draw on what is best in us in order to appeal to the best that we can find in one another, all with a view to that future we all share and the blessings we all seek for ourselves and for those who trust us with their money and their lives. Let us continue to work together in that spirit.

Whatever is beyond our control, we do control the way we do business. Unlike the ant, the beaver and the bee, we have the power to ask of everything we do: could we do this better? Could we do this in a smarter way, a fairer way, a more effective, more respectful or more dignified way? When the answer is no, let us stand firm on our practices. When the answer is yes, let us waste no time in changing. No matter what time and fortune throws our way, the character of the city we live in is entirely up to us. Let us keep it well.