

## **State of the City Keynote Address 2022**

### **Great the audience**

Good morning everyone! My name is Bill Halldin and I am extremely honored to be here with all of you today representing the Rocklin City Council in my first term as Mayor and delivering my first State of the City address. Thank you for joining us for this special early summer edition of the State of the City event and for your continued support of Rocklin.

### **Introduce Yourself**

I'll start with a little about myself, I was elected to the City Council nearly four years ago.

My wife Susan and I moved to Rocklin in 1999 to raise our family and launch a small business, Halldin Public Relations.

It has also been rewarding to serve in a volunteer capacity for numerous community organizations, including the Chamber itself, where I served on the board from 2003 to 2008, including a year as Chairman. I followed in the footsteps of so many people who gave selflessly to make Rocklin the great place it is today.

### **Introduce City Council with interesting facts**

Before I get into the business of the speech, I'd like to recognize my fellow City Council members.

In the Rocklin Chamber spirit, I'll also share an interesting fact about myself and City Council today ... something we can all relate to: our first, actual paying summer job.

Mine was as a lifeguard at the Globe Hollow Swimming Hole back in Connecticut. This was a massive place that could attract 2,000 people on a hot summer day, so the team, which you see here, earned our paychecks while still having a good time.

**Please help me recognize Vice-Mayor Ken Broadway** (pause for applause). Ken has served on the council since 2016 and has extensive community leadership experience. In his day job, he runs logistics for UPS, which we all know is an industry that becomes more complex by the day as we continue to order online.

Ken was hired for his first summer job in 1982, also working on his tan as a lifeguard, but in Virginia City, Nevada. We started out as lifeguards on opposite ends of the country and today we're serving together on City Council.

**I'd also like to recognize councilmember Jill Gayaldo** Jill is our current mayor emeritus and spoke at this event last year. Jill has deep historical family ties to Rocklin, an extensive history of

community service, and once upon a time was school district transportation executive, before retiring in 2018.

Jill's first job was at Kar Kwik drive through while in college at Weber State in Utah. She worked the late shift and her dad, a highway patrol trooper, would come to the #3 window every night to make sure they were safe, and to get free ice cream!

**Council member Greg Janda**, would you also stand up to be recognized (pause for applause)? Greg is our longest serving Council member, elected in 2012, is a steadying force for Rocklin leadership.

**Last but not least help me honor council member Joe Patterson.** Joe joined the Rocklin City Council in 2016, launched his small business Provident Strategies during the pandemic and, after a very strong showing on June 7, will be running in the general election this November to serve Rocklin in the State Assembly.

Joe went from his first job serving tables at a restaurant where his mom worked in the late 1990s, to serving Rocklin constituents in his skyrocketing political career.

#### **Introduce City Manager Aly Zimmermann**

This is also a great opportunity to recognize Rocklin City Manager Aly Zimmermann. In Aly's approximately 18 months with the City, she has proven herself to be a nimble and innovative leader.

She's helped usher in a more transparent and forward-thinking budget process, built an extensive network of partnerships through tireless collaboration with Rocklin's business, education and community groups, and filled key roles in City leadership positions, which she trusts to manage their areas of expertise, to outstanding effect.

Aly's first job was actually working for a state department as a teenager. She was only allowed to work a few hours a week for minimum wage but it seems her history of public services started early.

#### **Thank the Rocklin Chamber of Commerce**

I'd also like to recognize and thank the Rocklin Chamber of Commerce for partnering with the City on today's event, as well as for all of the support you provide to our community. 2022 has been a year of recovery and relative normalcy as we continue to work through the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chamber has been a great partner and liaison to the local businesses in so many

projects and will continue to be a resource as the City distributes nearly \$3 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act funds to support organizations across the City.

## **Transition to American Rescue Plan Act Plans**

### **ARPA Programs**

ARPA, or the American Rescue Plan Act, simply put, is federal dollars provided to state and local governments across the U.S. with the goal to aid Americans struggling with the economic crisis caused by COVID-19.

The City of Rocklin has been awarded just over \$7 million in ARPA funds to assist local businesses and non-profits in recovering from the pandemic, maintain vital services, increase the health and safety of residents, and more.

### **Spending planned by key resource effort**

Generally, the City's spending of the ARPA funds will fall into three categories.

The first is **internal support**, the second category is **revenue replacement and government services**.

### **Specific ARPA Community Support Funding**

The third, and most important category for this presentation today, is **community support funding**.

This funding will be distributed to public and private entities city-wide for revitalization programs benefiting people in a myriad of ways.

### **APRA - Restaurants**

We all know our local restaurants were hit hard by the pandemic restrictions and I was proud that the Rocklin city council was one of the first locally to allow outdoor dining expansion. It allowed for improved customer safety and the additional space needed for restaurants to serve them.

For the APRA restaurant assistance, the City and Chamber met with multiple local restaurant owners and incorporated their feedback into a proposed grant program to provide up to \$500,000 to the industry, including:

- A general grant of up to \$25,000 to supplement COVID-19 revenue losses

As well as:

- A reimbursable grant of up to \$25,000 for restaurants permanently and safely creating or expanding their outdoor dining areas

### **ARPA - Small businesses and hotels**

The City has also heard from so many small businesses, the life blood of the local economy, that have struggled through the pandemic and need a little more assistance to continue to recover.

\$750,000 has been designated for:

- Grants up to \$25,000 will be available to replace lost revenue due to COVID, taking at least a little financial pressure off of retailers, manufacturers, service providers and more.

I've spoken to many business owners, and please know your voices are being heard.

- These grants will also be available to Rocklin hotels, which saw significant declines in room nights that have yet to fully recover. Thank you to Placer Valley Tourism for their advocacy and education in this area.

### **Nonprofits – image slide**

The City Council also knows how much work is done in our community by non-profits, supporting Rocklin residents in so many ways. That's why we have set aside another \$500,00 for these groups.

- \$25,000 grants will be available for nonprofits, with priority given to those that serve Rocklin youth and those based in Rocklin.

### **Job Training and Mental Health**

ARPA funds will also be used for job training and the mental health of young people affected by COVID-19.

The Sierra College Foundation has submitted two proposals currently under review, which total \$200,000 in assistance, covering career technical education and mental health of students.

### **Career Technical Education**

The first program proposes a student assistant fund endowment (SAFE) for career technical education that provides grants for wraparound services like transportation, food, and housing.

While many students have free tuition and some financial aid, too often they struggle with basic needs that are vital to their educational success.

Many were laid off during COVID and are looking for new career paths that pay better wages. This program will help them stay on track with their education and career paths.

### ***Mental Health Aid***

The pandemic also increased the number of students in need of mental health care.

The proposed APRA-funded mental health program will allow 75 Rocklin-based students to receive 10 one-on-one sessions with a licensed therapist. This aid will also go toward training campus staff to be better prepared to handle mental health situations before they reach a crisis point.

## **Transition to Economic Development Strategy and Actions**

In addition to using the ARPA federal funds to support the Rocklin community, the City Council and staff earlier this year formalized an economic development strategy to help our business ecosystem grow and thrive.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

The strategy is focused on leveraging the economic strengths of Rocklin's public and private partners to help current businesses grow, attract new businesses, and encourage entrepreneurship to create new businesses.

Plans also include partnerships with our top-rated education providers to build a workforce pipeline with critical skills needed in target industries.

Implementation of the Economic Development Strategy will support the quality of life of Rocklin residents by enhancing the competitiveness of our local economy and maintaining a strong and diverse revenue and job base.

We are already seeing results.

### **Business Retention and Expansion**

Maybe the most important aspect of economic development, one that is often overlooked in favor of headline-grabbing new businesses, is keeping and growing the businesses we already have.

Earlier this year, Vice Mayor Broadway, Councilmember Gayaldo and I had the pleasure of celebrating a 14-year business in the City investing millions in a facility here – and making a decision to stay for the long term. That business is SMA America and we are thrilled they chose to stay right here.

City and Chamber staff have conducted numerous business retention and expansion visits in the past few months with Rocklin restaurants, major retailers, manufacturers and more.

Meetings have resulted in soft gains like stronger relationships and shared knowledge.

Meetings have also seen staff assist in critical short and long-term action items to help businesses serve more customers, expand their business footprint in Rocklin, find additional funding for operations and more.

The information we learn is always confidential but thank you to those we have already met and assisted, and we look forward to meeting with many others. Please reach out to me with requests or concerns.

### **Business Creation – Growth Factory**

On the business-creation and entrepreneurship side of economic development, the City is strengthening its relationship with the Growth Factory business incubator to explore ways to support scaling new local companies.

The Growth Factory headquarters operates right here in Rocklin on Granite Drive. Earlier this month they announced the second cohort of 13 companies from throughout the region that will take part in their annual accelerator program.

The cohort features business models connecting student athletes with potential sponsors, a customer communication platform that pays employees who receive positive online feedback, and a video game company that has already raised \$15 million in venture capital.

The Growth Factory also submitted a proposal for City ARPA funds to start a special small business development program with up to 20 **Rocklin-based businesses** that have faced financial insecurity.

The program would run over the course of 6 months and include instruction in business innovation, financial planning, and leadership development. It would culminate in a business showcase where owners promote their products and service.

## **Transition to Business Attraction and Openings**

### **New Businesses**

Next, onto business attraction, where the City of Rocklin has been gaining traction as a business-friendly city.

Rocklin offers two universities within its boundaries, Sierra Community College and William Jessup University. These and other regional schools, including Sacramento State and UC Davis, help Rocklin provide an educated workforce to employers.

More than 49 percent of residents 25 or older hold a bachelor's degree or higher, according to the 2019 American Community Survey, the highest rate in Placer County.

The City has also worked to attract a mix of employers to offer jobs in a variety of sectors that have grown over the past decade, including education, health care, the retail/service industry, and technology.

In the nine months since the last State of the City event, Rocklin has seen a number of new businesses open.

### **Tractor Supply Co.**

Tractor Supply is wrapping up development of a 22,000 square foot building on Lonetree Boulevard, in addition to 12,300 square feet of outdoor sales area, and a 4,500 square foot green house.

They plan to open in July.

### **Bennet's Westside Kitchen**

A State of the City speech wouldn't be complete without at least one announcement of a new restaurant or brewery. I'm happy to share three with you today.

At the very end of 2021, the Bennet Hospitality Group signed a lease at 6604 Lonetree Blvd., where they plan to open Bennett's Westside Kitchen Bar Market this fall.

The City is thrilled to have longtime residents and co-owners Brian and Susan opening a restaurant here that will bring an estimated 100 jobs to the City. The quality of the food is well known and I look forward to the dining experience.

### **Mindscape Fermentations**

The Crossings and Commons shopping centers have been magnets for new business, with Trader Joe's being a notable addition late last year.

Less than a month ago, a new local brewery was added when Mindscape Fermentations opened in the Crossings center. Mindscape is a women-owned and run business with a focus on hard Kombucha, craft beer, and fermented foods.

### **Mario's Early Toast**

The Rocklin location of Mario's Early Toast at Rocklin Rd. and I-80 is also now open and ready to serve you for breakfast, lunch, or, if you can't decide, brunch! We also have Mario Astorga here today to share his thoughts on being a small business owner, so we'll wait for the man himself to share details on his beautiful new restaurant.

## **Lucid Motors**

To close the new business section, I have two interesting new businesses to announce.

The first is still slightly under wraps, but we're all friends here, right?

Between just you and me, Lucid Motors, a luxury electric car company started by former lead Tesla Designers, is proposing a service and show room on Rocklin's Toy Row on Granite Drive.

Lucid Motors has made no formal announcement but the location is listed on their public website. These vehicles are not for those on city stipends like me, but the sales would bring additional tax dollars to Rocklin and another option to the already robust car lineup on Granite.

## **CPC Scientific Announcement**

I'm also very pleased to use this forum today to welcome CPC Scientific to the Rocklin business community. CPC is a leading life-science company which has chosen to move its U.S.-based manufacturing from the Bay Area to Rocklin.

CPC Scientific is a globally recognized company specializing in synthetic peptide production. The science is over my head, but they work with top biotechnology and pharmaceutical firms to help bring life-changing therapeutic drugs and diagnostic tests to market.

CPC's products are used by scientists in cutting-edge research to quell the global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to address antibiotic resistance.

The science may be complicated, but it's easy to understand how this life-science leader can continue to build on this industry cluster in the region, and attract more companies and high paying jobs. We'll learn more when I speak to David Godkin, CPC Vice President of Business Operations, in just a few minutes.

## **Transition to New Developments Across the City New Developments**

In addition to working on the business climate, the City has also been hard at work to facilitate growth and building in the private and residential sectors, with multiple projects proposed, approved or under construction.

Northwest Rocklin remains one of the last parts of the City where large parcels are poised for development. I'm pleased to make another exiting announcement today that may lead building on one large portion of these important properties:

Nugget Markets has been confirmed as part of a proposed project in northwest Rocklin!



Nugget would be the anchor tenant of a 95,000 square foot, 20-acre retail center at the newly proposed Placer Creek community master-planned development, located at the intersection of Whitney Ranch Parkway and University Avenue.

The retail center is the centerpiece of proposed plans for Placer Creek, which developer Cole Partners says would be a uniquely walkable community serving the Whitney Ranch area and the University District.

Started in 1926 by the Stille family in Woodland, Nugget Market is one of the best known and loved grocery stores in our region, with locations in the Sacramento Valley, Marin and Sonoma Counties. Placer Creek in northwest Rocklin is being planned and developed by Cole Partners Development Company of Sacramento.

Nugget and Placer Creek are in the pre-application process and will go through the required public review and entitlement process before any decisions are made.

### **Terracina**

An approved and now under construction project in northwest Rocklin is Terracina at Whitney Ranch.

This 288-unit affordable apartment community by USA Properties is an important addition to the City.

Residents living there can earn 30% to 70% of the average median income for Placer County – up to \$50,750 per year for a two-person household. It will provide working families, retirees on fixed income, and young people saving for their first home a chance to remain here in Rocklin.

### **College Park**

Other plans for development are also ramping up in the Sierra College area. The school and its partners have submitted plans for development on large parcels of land they own in the area off of Rocklin Rd. and Sierra College Blvd.

College Park is proposed to include residential, mixed-use villages, retail, office, medical and other uses, in addition to parks, open space and trails.

### **Rocklin Rd. and I-80 Interchange Planning**

With the proposed development in the Sierra College Area, it's important everyone is aware of the City is planning major improvements at the Rocklin Road/I-80 Interchange over the next few years.

This improvement project will include a variety of enhancements to improve connections between Sierra College and the Quarry District, relieve car congestion on Rocklin Road, add pedestrian and biking connections, and more.

Construction is envisioned to begin in 2026. The City is currently in the environmental study phase of the project, followed by a design phase from 2023-2025, and then construction.

### **Rocklin and Pacific Roundabout**

Continuing our virtual trip down Rocklin Rd., the City is replacing the existing four-way traffic signal at Rocklin Road and Pacific Street intersection with a two-lane roundabout.

As the City of Rocklin continues to grow and develop, traffic on the Rocklin Road and Pacific Street corridors will increase. The Rocklin Road and Pacific Street Roundabout Project will improve traffic operations and safety at the intersection.

Why a roundabout? Widening the road would have decimated numerous businesses. A roundabout minimizes the extra road pavement needed but it also came at quite a price – 100 percent funded by the federal government. You see, the feds love roundabouts because they keep traffic moving and lessen emissions.

Once complete, not only will the roundabout minimize delays for residents and visitors, it will also enhance the economic viability and livability of the Rocklin Road corridor.

Heavy construction is underway, but businesses in the area are open and would appreciate your support. So, stop by Café Delicious, Granite Rock Grill, Mezcalito, and Rubino's for lunch or dinner, wash clothes at Rocklin Laundry, keep your pets healthy at the Animal Eye Center and more.

### **SWRA Improvements**

The City is also continually improving our parks and recreation spaces. It's been exciting to see the popularity of the Sunset Whitney Recreation Area trails grow and I'm looking forward to expansions of this popular amenity.

SWRA currently features 2.7 miles of trails for people and their pets to enjoy, and the City recently broke ground on an additional 2.2 miles of trails to be rehabbed and opened later this year.

A master planning process for the entire 184 acres is also underway, to help us all bring into focus what this jewel in the middle of Rocklin might be in the long run.

### **Bike Pump Track at Whitney Community Park**

Back in northwest Rocklin, staff are evaluating design proposals to build a bike pump track at Whitney Community Park.

A pump track is a course designed for bicycles with banked turns and hills where riders travel the course with minimal pedaling. Similar paved pump tracks to the Rocklin concept exist in Temecula, CA, and Leavenworth, WA, with dirt tracks open locally in Auburn and Elk Grove.

The idea was prompted by community interest and Whitney Park was chosen as the best-suited potential site, given its dedicated development funding source (with funds currently available) and existing infrastructure.

A professional design will allow the City to realistically estimate the cost and maintenance of building. A contract will come before City Council this summer.

### **2022 Concert Season**

At the Quarry Park Amphitheater, the 2022 Concert series is running hot this summer with shows scheduled nearly every weekend.

The City brought in professionals to manage booking, promoting and running the shows and the partnership has been successful. Get your tickets now to see the Spin Doctors, Lita Ford, Lonestar and more at [stproductions.com](http://stproductions.com).

### **Transition to What Makes Rocklin Great**

I've shared today how the City plans to use federal funds to support a cross-section of Rocklin in continuing to recover from the pandemic.

I've also outlined a few of the recently implemented economic development strategies that will help Rocklin's business ecosystem grow and thrive.

We've also seen success with new businesses opening frequently, others working to expand, and some locating here from out of town.

The City itself also continues to improve services, infrastructure, and parks, with major projects underway and scheduled to be complete this year.

Before we hear from our great lineup of interview guests, I'd like to leave you with a few pieces of general good news and highlight why I think Rocklin is one of the best places to live in America.

### **Local Sports Champions**

First, a rousing congratulations to our high school and college sports champions in 2022.

Sierra College's Woman's Basketball Team took home the California Community College Athletic Association's State Championship trophy in March.

On the heels of that state championship, our own William Jessup University Warriors men's basketball team reached the Elite 8 of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics basketball tournament, finishing the season with a 30-7 record.

I think with these showings, it's not a stretch to call Rocklin a basketball town!

### **Quarry Park Adventures**

Quarry Park Adventures also continues to grow its business and renown.

The park was recently named to the USA Today's Top 10 Best Aerial Adventure Parks. They noted QPA is the only adventure park in the United States located in a sixty-foot-deep former granite quarry, has sixty elements of ropes, bridges, and beams to challenge people young and old, and provides access to six distinct aerial adventures from zip lines to rock climbing and rappelling.

Bring your family or book your next business team building event, you won't regret it.

### **Rocklin a National Real-estate Hotspot**

The City is often recognized as a great place to live by media outlets with one of the most recent accolades announced last year when Money Magazine named Rocklin one of the top 50 best small cities to live in America.

Just a few weeks ago, Zillow and Redfin reported that the Sacramento region is one of the most popular destinations for homebuyers. I quote:

"In the Sacramento region, Rocklin was the most popular destination. Zillow calculated a community's demand by looking at home value growth, daily page views on its site and the growth in available home listings. According to Zillow, the typical home in Rocklin is worth \$711,492 and prices went up a robust 5.9% during the first quarter of 2022."

### **What Makes Rocklin Great?**

It's fantastic to see Rocklin being recognized and the data points illustrate many of the reasons why.

But what really separates Rocklin as a highly desirable community?

To me, it's not numbers or income levels. It is because of you - the Rocklin residents and business owners.

Your willingness to roll up your sleeves, give your time, money and effort back to the betterment of the community.

There are so many examples.

The Rocklin dog park is a result of a concerted effort by Rocklin Residents Unite for Fido to create, maintain and enhance this special space for dog owners and their pets. It's a beautiful area and I'm always pleased when I hear that people come from all over to visit the park.

The many volunteers at the Rocklin Historical Society keep Rocklin's rich history alive and well.

Public safety volunteers help to keep our City safe in so many ways.

From elementary through College, our young people are raising money and using their knowledge to help residents.

There are a multitude of others. I could be here up here all day touting the efforts of our educators, sports leagues, neighborhood watch groups, veterans' organizations, Kiwanis club, foster youth assistance, and so many more.

You, the people of Rocklin are what make Rocklin great. Please, continue to give of yourself, and I thank each and every one of you for your work to help the Council and staff lead our great City.

Thank you!