

Mayor's Inauguration Speech  
January 13, 2009

WELCOME AND THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING THIS AFTERNOON. I'D LIKE THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR PRESENCE. IT'S A TREMENDOUS PRIVILEGE AND MORE THAN A LITTLE HUMBLING TO BE STANDING BEFORE YOU TODAY AS YOUR NEW MAYOR. I WOULD BE REMISS IF I DIDN'T THANK EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE CITY ELECTION AT EVERY LEVEL. OUR TURNOUT WAS MORE THAN 85% AND I THINK THAT SAYS A LOT ABOUT SCOTTSDALE RESIDENTS AND THEIR INTEREST IN THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT... *OUR* GOVERNMENT.

WE ARE LIVING IN TOUGH TIMES AND WE MUST SURMOUNT THE CHALLENGES FACING OUR CITY. BUT IT'S IN TOUGH TIMES THAT WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY – NO, THE IMPERATIVE – TO BUILD A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE. WE CAN NO LONGER BE COMPLACENT. THE CITY GOVERNMENT CAN PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK AND FOCAL POINT, BUT THE FOUNDATION AND DIRECTION FOR THE FUTURE MUST BE DIRECTED BY YOU. WE NEED TO RETURN TO THE PROUD SCOTTSDALE TRADITION OF HAVING A CITIZEN-DRIVEN GOVERNMENT WITH A "CAN DO" ATTITUDE.

THERE IS A GROWING CYNICISM THAT GOVERNMENTS NO LONGER WORK FOR THE PEOPLE. SOME HAVE EVEN SUGGESTED THAT CITY GOVERNMENT IS SO COMPLACENT AND OUR CITIZENS SO DIVIDED THAT WE CANNOT WORK TOGETHER FOR A COMMON FUTURE, LET ALONE STAYING AHEAD OF THE PACK.

I DON'T SHARE THAT VIEW AND I URGE THE CYNICS TO GRAB HOLD AND WORK WITH US FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR ALL.

WE HAVE TWO PRESSING ISSUES THAT MUST BE TACKLED IMMEDIATELY. FIRST AND FOREMOST IS THE CITY'S BUDGET DEFICIT OF AT LEAST FORTY MILLION DOLLARS. AS A CITY WE MUST TIGHTEN OUR BELTS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

TO THAT END I'VE ASKED OUR CITY MANAGER TO IMMEDIATELY BEGIN A REVIEW OF EVERY CITY DEPARTMENT AND PROGRAM -- TO SEARCH FOR WASTE, INEFFICIENCY AND DUPLICATION – AND FOR HIM TO PRESENT A PROPOSAL TO THE COUNCIL IN APRIL. I TRUST THE CITY MANAGER WILL AVAIL HIMSELF OF SCOTTSDALE'S GREATEST ASSET -- ITS CITIZENS -- IN HIS ENDEAVOR.

THE SECOND ISSUE THAT TAKES HIGH PRIORITY IS SOUTH SCOTTSDALE AND SPECIFICALLY THE McDOWELL CORRIDOR. SOUTH SCOTTSDALE IS FULL OF VIBRANT, STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS AND INVOLVED RESIDENTS. BUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA CONTINUES TO LAG. THAT'S GOT TO CHANGE.

WITHIN THE NEXT 90 DAYS I WILL CALL FOR A **SUMMIT** IN SOUTH SCOTTSDALE INVITING HOMEOWNERS, PROPERTY OWNERS, BUSINESS OWNERS AND RESIDENTS TO MEET AND BEGIN DEVELOPING AN ACTION-ORIENTED ECONOMIC PLAN FOR THE McDOWELL CORRIDOR BASED ON THE NEEDS OF THE AREA AND THE VISION OF THE RESIDENTS.

AS YOUR MAYOR I ALONG WITH, I'M SURE, MY FELLOW COUNCIL MEMBERS, INTEND TO REACH OUT TO THOSE IN THE COMMUNITY WHO HAVE THE INTEREST AND ABILITY TO HELP US CHART A BETTER FUTURE. THIS INVOLVES CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT.

I PROPOSE USING **TASK-SPECIFIC** ADVISORY COMMISSIONS, WHICH WILL BRING NEW IDEAS AND FRESH ENERGY TO SCOTTSDALE. A GOOD EXAMPLE OF SUCH A COMMISSION IS, AS YOU MAY RECALL, THE ETHICS COMMITTEE – A CITIZEN-DRIVEN COMMITTEE THAT BROUGHT FORWARD A COMPREHENSIVE ETHICS CODE FOR CITY OFFICIALS.

WITH RESPECT TO OUR STANDING COMMISSIONS, WE NEED TO REFORM AND EMPOWER THEM TO INSURE A BETTER WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY COUNCIL. AFTER THE CITY MANAGER'S APRIL PRESENTATION ON RESTRUCTURING AND RETOOLING CITY GOVERNMENT, I WILL BE ASKING MY COLLEAGUES AND THE COMMUNITY FOR INPUT ON HOW OUR CITIZEN-BASED COMMISSIONS CAN BETTER OPERATE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CITY COUNCIL.

I WILL ASK THE CITY COUNCIL TO ADD BACK THE **BUDGET COMMITTEE** AS A STANDING COMMITTEE. THIS COMMITTEE, WILL ONCE AGAIN SERVE AS AN OVERSIGHT TO HELP REIN IN UNWARRANTED SPENDING AND MAKE SURE THAT OUR TAX MONIES ARE SPENT WISELY.

I HAVE ASKED OUR CITY'S TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION CHAIR, BILL HOWARD, TO IMMEDIATELY BEGIN WORK WITH THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION AND THE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT TO MAKE A PRESENTATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL BY NEXT NOVEMBER REGARDING OUR CURRENT POLICY, PRACTICES AND TO MAKE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON SYNCHRONIZING TRAFFIC LIGHTS, THE PRIORITIZING OF DEDICATED RIGHT TURN LANES AT BUSY

INTERSECTIONS AND THE INCREASING OF PULL-OUT LANES FOR BUSES AND TROLLEYS.

A CITIZEN-DRIVEN EFFORT THAT WILL BE REMEMBERED AS SCOTTSDALE'S MOST MEMORABLE AND PRECIOUS LANDMARK IS THE McDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE. BUT PROGRESS HAS BEEN SLOWED.

I WILL MEET WITH THE ARIZONA LAND COMMISSIONER TO DISCUSS THE AVAILABILITY OF UNDEVELOPABLE LAND WE COULD ADD TO THE PRESERVE. I WILL ALSO MEET WITH THE McDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE COMMISSION ON HOW THEY AND THE CITY COUNCIL CAN BEST MOVE FORWARD ON COMPLETING THE PRESERVE. IT'S TIME FOR ACTION NOW. WE'VE WAITED TOO LONG.

WE MUST WORK HARD TO PROTECT OUR LUCRATIVE RESORT-HOSPITALITY COMMUNITY, SPECIAL EVENTS SUCH AS THE FBR OPEN, THE BARRET-JACKSON AUCTION, THE MANY NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOWS, AS WELL AS THE OTHER EVENTS WHICH ARE UNIQUE AND PROFITABLE TO OUR CITY'S ECONOMY, AND SERVE TO ENHANCE SCOTTSDALE'S CACHET. WESTWORLD AND THE ENTRY-WAY TO THE PRESERVE AND THE DESERT DISCOVERY CENTER ARE TOO IMPORTANT TO OUR FUTURE AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING. TO GET STARTED, I WILL ASK TWO OF MY COUNCIL COLLEAGUES TO JOIN WITH ME ON A TASK FORCE TO FORGE A MEANINGFUL AND LONG-TERM AGREEMENT WITH BARRET-JACKSON.

REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT -- WE ARE GOING TO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT BUSINESS REGULATIONS, ZONING ORDINANCES AND FIND AREAS WE CAN STREAMLINE TO CUT THE RED TAPE THAT NOW HINDERS MANY POTENTIAL AND EXISTING BUSINESSES. SMALL BUSINESSES CONTINUE TO BE THE BACKBONE OF SCOTTSDALE'S ECONOMY.

I WILL ESTABLISH A MAYOR'S **BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL** COMPOSED OF SMALL, MIDDLE AND LARGE BUSINESS OWNERS. IN THIS EXTREMELY COMPETITIVE MARKET, WE NEED TO PULL TOGETHER AS A BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND STRATEGICALLY POSITION OUR BUSINESSES ON THE COMPETITIVE EDGE. I WANT TO DIRECTLY HEAR FROM THIS COLLECTIVE OF BUSINESSES THEIR CONCERNS, IDEAS, AND INITIATIVES.

WE NEED TO DO SOME HOUSEKEEPING AS TO THE CITY CHARTER. I WILL ASK THE CITY COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH A CHARTER COMMITTEE. IT HAS BEEN 13 YEARS SINCE WE UPDATED OUR CHARTER. IT'S TIME FOR AN UPDATE.

LATER TONIGHT I'LL BE ASKING MY COUNCIL COLLEAGUES TO JOIN WITH ME IN KEEPING OUR ELECTIONS IN SEPTEMBER AND NOVEMBER. WE SHOULDN'T GO BACK TO A MARCH AND MAY ELECTIONS WHERE ONLY 15 TO 30 PERCENT OF VOTERS PARTICIPATE. OUR STATE REPRESENTATIVES KAVANAGH AND REAGAN ARE PROPOSING LEGISLATION TO MAKE THE SEPTEMBER/NOVEMBER ELECTION FAIRER TO ALL. LET'S SUPPORT THEIR EFFORTS FOR WORKABLE SOLUTIONS.

IT HAS BEEN THROUGH OUR CITIZENRY'S HARD WORK AND CONSTANT COMMITMENT TO IMPROVEMENT THAT SCOTTSDALE IS ARIZONA'S PREMIER COMMUNITY – THE BEST THE SOUTHWEST HAS TO OFFER. TO THOSE THAT WORKED SO HARD AND LONG TO MAKE THE SCOTTSDALE OF TODAY, WE OWE A DEBT TO SUSTAIN OUR COMMUNITY. WE ALSO HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO OURSELVES AND TO FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MAKE THE MOST OF OUR FISCAL AND CIVIC RESOURCES AND TO TURN OUR CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE THEY BECOME PROBLEMS

IF WE WILL MEET THE VERY REAL CHALLENGES WE FACE TOGETHER, WE WILL REAP THE BENEFITS TOGETHER -- ALL OF US. WE WILL NOT SACRIFICE THE TRADITIONS AND VALUES THAT MAKE SCOTTSDALE UNIQUE. BUT WE HAVE TO DO SO OPENLY, WITH AS MUCH CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AS POSSIBLE.

TO PARAPHRASE PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER, THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH SCOTTSDALE THAT FAITH, INTELLIGENCE AND THE ENERGY OF OUR CITIZENS CANNOT CURE. I AM INCREDIBLY OPTIMISTIC THAT WE CAN AND WILL BRING SCOTTSDALE BACK TOGETHER AND SET A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR OUR FUTURE.