

Thank You.

To my family, my mom, my aunt, my grandmother and grandfather, my fiancé, supporters, colleagues, friends, employees of the city, first responders, maintenance workers, and to the entire city of Stockton, thank you. I am humbled and honored to stand before you as your Mayor.

During the past four years, I've met countless people both here and nationally who are disillusioned with government. People who believe government far too often gets in the way, is not responsive to citizens, does not care about their day-to-day realities, and that those who are making decisions on their behalf don't have their best interests at heart. These beliefs have given rise to a dangerous sense of nihilism and lack of faith in the ability of government to do anything well. Tonight represents a rejection of that notion, a reinvention if you will, and an invitation to believe again, Stockton.

To believe not just in me, but in we.

An invitation to believe in our collective ability to Reinvent Stockton into a community of hope and opportunity.

This moment, this historic moment, began 26 years ago near Valverde Park, where a teenaged girl discovered that she was pregnant.

With support from her mother and sister and church family, and despite the child's father's incarceration, she raised her child and instilled in him the traits that make this city someplace special.

They taught the young man that despite living in Louis Park, Nightingale, and Fox Creek, that the sky was the limit, that he mattered, that he would have to work twice as hard to catch up and that he would have to be tough and resilient to survive and be successful.

They schemed to provide the village it would take to raise the child and with support from Seifert Center rec league basketball, AAU coaches, and summer activities at Victory and Stribley Park they were successful.

It was these same lessons that propelled the child to Stanford and that prepared him for tragedy 20 years after his birth when his cousin was murdered at Kelley Drive. At the moment, the young man had a choice- nihilism or hope, apathy or action- and because of the lessons he learned from the community that raised him, he chose to turn tragedy into triumph, like Stocktonians do every day, and won election as a City Councilmember four years ago, and now today is your Mayor. This moment and this story is quintessentially a Stockton one.

In November as a community, Stockton, we also made choices. We chose to elect a smart and thoughtful council, who may not always agree but will always do what they believe is in the city's best interest. We chose to invest in our young people and in our community with the passage of Measure M, which will provide needed funding for library and recreation activities. And we have another choice before us today. Today we have the opportunity to choose to solve the issues we face as a community, instead of just talking about them. Today we have the opportunity to choose to focus on where we're going, instead of where we've been. Today we have the opportunity to choose Unity, to Choose Hope, to choose Work, To Choose to Reinvent Stockton.

As President Kennedy said, "We choose these things not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because the challenge is one that we are willing to accept, unwilling to postpone, and one which we will indeed accomplish together."

Priority: Violence/Public Safety

Tonight we choose to Reinvent Stockton through dedicating ourselves to improving public safety and reducing violence. By focusing on the five hot zone communities and our Ceasefire brothers, we choose to understand the complex issues these communities and young men face are more than just criminality and demand a response more than only more cops and more jail time. We choose not to call law enforcement to be our cops and teachers and jobs and social workers and mental health professionals but to also provide these communities with the resources needed to be healthy and safe. Once we do this the city will have a triple bottom line: more safety, less incarceration and greater trust between the community and law enforcement.

Additionally, we choose to invest in those most likely to be victims and perpetrators of violent crime, young men who are at risk hundreds of times higher than you and I for victimization and incarceration. We will make specific commitments to help these young people reduce their risk of involvement in violence and other crimes with an emphasis on employment and housing.

Priority: Homelessness

Tonight we choose to Reinvent Stockton through working with the county to implement a housing first model to reduce homelessness in our community.

Priority: Promise Zone

Tonight we choose to Reinvent Stockton by continuing the work of the South Stockton Promise Zone, led by the Reinvent South Stockton Coalition, to create a cradle-to-career pipeline and improve outcomes for that part of our city. To that end, I am pleased to announce the Regional Director for Housing and Urban Development will be meeting with me and staff tomorrow in Stockton to discuss future collaborations.

Priority: Blight and Slumlords

Tonight we chose to Reinvent Stockton and serve notice to slumlords and perpetrators of blight that it's no longer acceptable to provide substandard housing, property management, or trash our All-American city.

Priority: Economic Development

Tonight we choose to Reinvent Stockton by supporting local business and entrepreneurs and to be creative about how we attract new business and industry. It's in that spirit that I'm proud to announce, in partnership with the Downtown Stockton Alliance and Centro Community Partners with sponsorships from BBVA Compass bank and the City of Stockton, a program that targets nontraditional entrepreneurs with the goal to develop new businesses to populate our downtown. Please call my office or the Downtown Stockton Alliance to sign up.

Priority: Education

Tonight we choose to Reinvent Stockton and partner with our school districts and endeavor to work and make the same Promise to our students that the cities of Oakland, Pittsburgh and Kalamazoo have made to theirs: that if they do everything right and graduate high school that there will be options for them to afford college or be trained for a career.

In that spirit, I am pleased tonight to announce a partnership with Stockton Unified School District and Scholly, an easy-to-use mobile application that helps students find and apply for college scholarships. Together, we are offering Stockton seniors free access to the Scholly app, where they can get the guidance and support they need to find college scholarships.

With these choices, we are poised to become a model of urban renewal.

A model of unity, not division,

a model of hope and not fear,

a model of action and not apathy,

a model of problem solving and not pettiness,

a model of bridges and not walls,

a model of the benefits of diversity,
a community of opportunity and hope.

Stockton, I am more resolute than ever in my belief that our city's best days are ahead.
I say this because I know you and I know us.

In the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“Forget the former things;

do not dwell on the past.

See, I am doing a new thing!

Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?

I am making a way in the wilderness

and streams in the wasteland.”

Together we will Reinvent Stockton. God bless you all. Thank you.