

Mayor Barry Chang  
City of Cupertino  
State of the City Speech  
1/27/2016

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen and distinguished guests. Thank you all for coming to the State of the City.

First, I want to thank my family for their unconditional support. Without their support, I wouldn't be here today. My daughter, Aileen, is working in Kawaii as an optometrist. My second daughter, Alice, is an attorney. She just got a big assignment at work. My son, Howard, is working for a High Tech Company. They would love to attend today, but they have to work. Therefore, they cannot be here. My deep gratitude toward my wife, Sue. She is always on my side. Sue, can you please stand up? Thank you very much.

I would like to also thank my city council colleagues for electing me Mayor: Vice Mayor Savita Vaidhyanathan, and Councilmembers Darcy Paul, Rod Sinks and Gilbert Wong. They are all sitting at the head table. They are the best council team I have ever worked with. Please give them a round of applause. If you don't think that they are the best councilmembers, please see them after the meeting. You can easily find them at the head table.

I also want to thank the Cupertino Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce for co-hosting this event. Thanks to the entire city staff for keeping our city in such a nice shape. They are the best city staff that we have ever had. May I ask them to stand up? Please give them a nice round of applause. Here are City manager, David Brandt and City Attorney Randy Hom. If you don't think they are doing a good job, please see me after the meeting. A special thanks to the city's communication team for making us looking good. They have been working very, very hard for this event.

Yes. It has been a long time. I have waited for more than six years. I was very happy when I was elected Mayor on December 1 last year. When we got home that night, my wife reminded me that the hard work to be a good mayor is ahead. She cited the old Chinese saying: "To do a good job, one must have two brushes of skill." I asked her "How many brushes do I have?" She answered, "You only have half of a brush. However, you have potential." That is why she has been married to me for 35 years because I have potential.

She is right. I have potential; with a persistent will and a warm heart! Here are some examples of my potential. I started learning how to ski when I was about 40 years old. I can go down any black diamond trail without much trouble. I switched from skiing to snowboarding when I was about 50 years old. I managed snowboarding down Gun Barrel at Heavenly Ski Resort several times. I remembered seeing a warning sign with a skeleton: Danger! You may die! Here is a video clipping when I enjoyed snowboarding on the slopes.

Another example is: I have loved reading poems since I was in High School. But, I never wrote one until I was 62 years old. I started writing poems in Chinese about two years ago. Now, you know my age. I enjoy it so much and started writing the English poems just less than two weeks ago. And, I believe that if we have more people write poems, we will have a more peaceful world. Here are my two poems, in Chinese and in English:

哈佛風雪 *Strolling through Harvard Campus on a Blizzard Evening*  
by Barry Chang 2016-1-18

古色古香的  
哈佛校區，

在白茫茫的  
大雪中矗立！

雪，狂襲。  
人，畏避。

枯藤，無處覓。  
老樹，猶挺立。  
昏鴉，歸巢畢。

有心人，  
在哈佛  
尋尋覓覓！

*Strolling through Harvard Campus on a Blizzard Evening*  
by Barry Chang 2016-1-18

Harvard,  
full of history and nostalgia,  
standing firm in the blizzard  
Snow howling,  
People hiding.

Dry vine could not be found  
Old trees are intertwined,  
And in the evening,  
The crows are nestled down.

One lone person is strolling,  
still searching,  
round and round!

矽谷的晨曦 *Silicon Valley Sunrise*  
by Barry Chang 2015-12-18 7:30 AM

睡夢中醒來  
跟妳的美麗  
撞個滿懷！

清新朝靄  
除盡昨日的陰霾。

妳還帶來  
半天虹彩！

*Silicon Valley Sunrise*  
By Barry Chang

Just woke up from my dream  
Stumble onto your beauty  
Early morning sunbeam  
In the winter air of fresh and clean

You wiped out  
Yesterday's cloudy doubt  
And brought me  
Rainbow proud!

In 2014 on my birthday, my daughter, Alice, gave me a book of selected poems by Robert Frost. In it she wrote:

To Bobby, (Chinese pronunciation of Daddy)

For always taking the road less traveled by.

Love,  
Alice

She even stuck a green tag on the poem: "The road not taken." She well describes who I am. Cupertino's first Poet Laureate, David Denny will read it for me. Here is David...

*The Road Not Taken*  
By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

Yes. I always took the road less traveled by. And that has made all the difference for me. The road ahead of us may be bumpy. However, if we all do the right things for our city, it will continue to be a great city on earth. I have been known for my straightforward style. Let me tell you the good news first: our great city is on a very solid financial ground. We received about \$88,860,000 in revenue; our expenditure is about \$ 86,203,000. And, we have \$46,576,000 in reserve.

Most of our revenue comes from property tax and sales tax. If we have a booming Vallco Shopping Center and the Oaks Shopping Center, our property and retail sale tax revenue will increase. Both property owners would like to invest and re-develop their properties. However, the Vallco Development project is on hold now. The opposition group has filed paperwork to collect signatures to place a measure on the ballot soon.

The major part of our expenditure is on road maintenance. Yes. We have a reserve of \$46,576,000. However, if we don't watch carefully, it can be wiped out in just a single big item. For instance, to build a brand new civic center will put us in debt and leave no money for other urgent and important items, like providing a free shuttle bus service for our seniors and students. We also need to make our streets safer for pedestrians and bikers.

The world is watching the Apple's Campus 2 Project. You may want to know where it stands. I visited the job site couple months ago. Apple's senior executive told me that it will be finished on schedule by the end of the year. This building will be one of the most "green" buildings on earth. Other good news is: Apple will have a very special Apple Store in Cupertino.

There will be lots of excitement this year. I would like to encourage all our residents to get involved, be informed, find the facts, tell the truth and do the right things. Whatever you do will have a tremendous impact to this great city for the long term. In the meantime, be fair, be just, be honest, be kind to each other.

I don't want to just paint a pretty picture for you. We do have some great challenges ahead of us. Climate Change, for example, is a big and very serious issue. Yes, it is a global issue. However, it has all come down to the local actions. As Pope Francis put it, the climate change is a moral issue. He is absolutely right. If this generation is unable and unwilling to adapt to the change of the climate, the human race may go extinct when extreme weather hits. It may come sooner than what we anticipate. That will be really a shame! It is our responsibility. All of us have to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions as much as we can. Please take a look at Carl Sagan's narrative about the small pale blue dot, our Mother Earth.

Look at Earth from space. Our Mother Earth is just a small pale blue dot. As of today, this is the only place in the vast universe that we can find living creatures. It is very fragile. We have to protect this pale blue dot if we would like to have our future generations live and thrive. In order to protect our environment, our city has initiated the Community Choice Energy program, put solar panels at the Service Center, installed more electric car charging stations, banned the use of plastic bag, etc. We have to do more. Another example, if every American drove 10 mile less per week, we can reduce 100 billion pounds of carbon emissions each year.

Talking about driving less, the traffic congestion is another problem in this region. It is really bad now and will get worse because we don't have an effective mass rapid transit system in place. Silicon Valley traffic just jumped up from the 6<sup>th</sup> worst area in the United States to 5<sup>th</sup> place within the last year. Major funding for

transportation comes from gasoline sale tax. It has continued to drop. This means we will have less money to solve our traffic congestion problems. I just attended the new Mayors and City Councils conference in Sacramento last week. Our state leaders are working hard and trying to find a solution. In the meantime, the funding for transportation will continue to drop. Another problem, in my opinion, is Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is not working on moving people where people want to go. Instead, VTA has been working to move people where VTA wants them to go. Unless VTA shifts its paradigm, the traffic congestion in our area will get much worse. We have to do more within our city and cooperate with our neighboring cities. I would like to see that we start a free shuttle bus service inside our city and reach out to the Cal-Trains station. We need to do more to provide safer paths for bikers and pedestrians. I have asked our Library Commissioner, Mr. Jerry Liu, to host a video contest among our students to find a solution for our traffic congestion. Jerry, can you stand up, please? Thanks. I am glad to announce that we have four winners for three awards: first place, second place and two tied for third place. The first place winners, Derreck Lee and Jonathan Fung, please stand up.

Now, another video about traffic...

"So what ARE we going to do about it? The next chapter has yet to be fully written, but in the last year, we have achieved great momentum. The cities of the West Valley and North County have organized to look for solutions. Please stay tuned.

Lehigh Southwest Cement Plant's pollution issue is not only is a local issue, but also a state issue and national issue because Silicon Valley is the economic engine for our state and our nation. This antiquated, dirty cement plant is located between Cupertino Hills and Los Altos Hills. It has received numerous "Notice of Violations" from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Mine and Reclamation, State of California, State Water Quality Control Board, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Department of Labor and Santa Clara County. This is the only cement plant out of about 1,000 cement plants in the United States that is so close to a major metropolitan area. The air and water pollution this cement plant produces is harmful not only to the 7.2 million San Francisco Bay Area residents, but also kills many of the living creatures in the area.

EPA just came down with a consent decree on April 29, 2015 and fined Lehigh Cement \$7.55 million dollars to clean the Permanente Creek. EPA also issued a "Notice of Violation" regarding Lehigh's violation in Federal Clean Air Acts on March 10, 2010. This cement plant is still using antiquated equipment for its operation. If Lehigh is unwilling and unable to obey the laws, it should be shut down!

Our City is blessed with a very diverse population, and we do celebrate our different cultures. But, we still have racial issues here. It is not as noticeable or as bad as the nation. However, I have personally encountered several racial incidents. Yes, black life matters. In fact, every life matters. This is a country built on immigration. We are all immigrants. There is no place for one group of people to look down or discriminate against another. I remember last year when I held five town hall meetings myself, there were a few people who came to my meeting, yelling and screaming at me. Later on, one wrote an article and posted it on the opposition group's website. He wrote that he would like to see my body hanging on a tree and twisted in the wind. He is a white male with a Ph D. degree. This kind of behavior has no place in Cupertino, nor in the nation. We all are passengers on this small pale blue dot, called Mother Earth. We shall treat each other fairly and kindly.

In comparison, our Mother Earth is 4.543 billion years of age. The Milky Way Galaxy is 13.21 billion years old. Human beings are about 100 years old and the average life span is just a very small fraction of a second. We must respect life and respect each other.

With all these great challenges ahead of us, I encourage our residents to get involved, find the facts, tell the truth and do the right thing. In the meantime, to be fair, be just, be honest and be kind.

As you probably already know, some of our City Council meetings last too long; sometimes till 5 AM in the morning. I am glad to report to you that we agreed to end our City Council meetings by 11 PM. We ended our January 19<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting 50 minutes before 11 PM. We have 100% success rate. Even though it is only one meeting, we are on the right track.

I would like to have our city's poet laureate, Amanda Williamsen, come up and read another of Robert Frost's famous poems for me: *Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Here is Amanda.

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

We all have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep. Let's go out and do the right things for our city, our state, our nation and Mother Earth. In the meantime, have fun. Thank you very much.