

Mayor Christine Lundberg  
2015 State of the Springfield

Thank you and welcome to my 2015 State of Springfield address. Thank you to A3 student Sabrina Gross for the wonderful entertainment. And thank you to everyone for making time to share in our successes and get excited for Springfield's future.

It is my pleasure to return to the Richard E. Wildish Theater for tonight's event. The Wildish Theater stands as a vivid reminder of what we can do as a community. It has been 15 years since a group of citizens formed the Springfield Renaissance Development Corporation and worked to create the cornerstone of our downtown revitalization.

Tonight I would like to recognize one of the original SRDC board members – Tom Draggoo.

Tom, join me on the stage.

After working tirelessly guiding the Wildish Theater to where it stands now, Tom is planning to step down from his position on the theater's board of directors. To commemorate your dedication to the theater, on behalf of the Richard E. Wildish Theater Board of Directors – it is my pleasure to announce that the stage of the Wildish Theater will now be known as the Tom Draggoo Main Stage.

Thank you Tom for your time and dedication.

Changing Perceptions of Springfield –

Last year, I started my speech by recognizing and appreciating the attitude that was growing in our community. An attitude that demonstrated Springfield is a welcoming community and moving in the right direction. I like that attitude and I

saw it continue in 2014. And, as I made my way around Springfield last year at events and meetings or in the grocery store, one theme seemed to rise to the top of the conversation. How we, as a community, are taking care of Springfield.

- \* We care about Springfield and we care about each other
- \* We like and care about the diversity of the people in our community
- \* We love our hometown feel and want to show it off
- \* We care about our businesses, large and small
- \* We care that our children are well educated and will have opportunities to work and live in Springfield
- \* We care that our seniors know they are respected and valued

How we take care of Springfield is no more evident than in our philosophy and approach that is pragmatic and practical. Over the past few years, we have not only seen a significant drop in crime in our downtown core, but throughout Springfield. Going back in time four short years ago. (slide on crime) This is what crime in downtown Springfield looked like. This is now – you'll see the newest crime rates in blue.- (new slide). The change is dramatic and the community shares in this success. A huge part of this positive change is due to the men and women of the Springfield Police Department. While policing has become a national topic of discussion –

I'd like to take this opportunity to reaffirm my support for the Springfield Police Department and thank them for their work at what is often an impossibly difficult job. This Friday is National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day – I encourage

you to show your support for the men and women in law enforcement by thanking an officer, wearing blue clothing, or supporting them on social media.

I also want to recognize our Fire and Life Safety Department who on the night of July 17 worked tirelessly to contain a fast-moving fire that engulfed and destroyed the Springfield Plywood and Veneer mill. Thankfully the employees escaped - but the building was lost and families devastated. It was a loss for the entire community. That is when, in the spirit of cooperation and support, the community pulled together, taking care of each other, assisting mill owners and those that lost their jobs. The city, along with financial institutions, SUB, the Springfield School District, United Way, and others worked on a number of options for business recovery and resources to help employees. This work is ongoing. We are hopeful that we will be able to announce that the mill will rebuild in the future.

Taking care of each other also means taking steps so people can better take care of themselves. Our senior population is the backbone of Springfield. They are the keepers of our Proud History. They are our mothers, fathers, grandparents and neighbors. While we have great programs for seniors through Willamalane, our public library and Lane Council of Governments –in 2015 I want to do more.

So I am happy to announce that Springfield has partnered with AARP and Lane Council of Governments to become part of the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age Friendly Communities. Under the program we will develop a stakeholder group that will provide guidance for Springfield to become a more age-friendly community.

This program doesn't mean we will lose sight of those working to be our future. This year voters in Springfield passed a \$71.5 million dollar school bond measure that will focus spending on the elements voters said were most important: student

safety and security, preparing our students to be competitive for 21st-century jobs, and replacing Hamlin Middle School.

Money from the bond measure will affect every school and every student in the district.

The importance of schools can never be underestimated. Raising tomorrow's leaders for tomorrow's jobs has never been more important. I want to see a Springfield where our children grow up and have the opportunity to stay in their hometown. A Springfield where we keep our talented students and they become the tradespeople, doctors, engineers, CEO's and Mayors of the future.

One place where this is happening right now is at Springfield High School. Springfield High Principal José da Silva has been working with Lane Workforce Partnership on a unique program to fast-track student connections with local employers. The Springfield High "School-to-Work" program brings in industry representatives for monthly tours of Career Technical Education classrooms to demonstrate the hands-on skills and knowledge that students are receiving. Perhaps even more importantly, the employers are able to see in action the attributes that make SHS students even more attractive to potential employers.

This is exactly the type of program that will give our children an edge in the global and local economy. And it has been the work of Springfield High principle Jose da Silva that has brought this program to life. It is this type of person who exemplifies my yearly Sprit of Springfield Award. So it is with great pleasure that I announce this year's winner of the 2015 Spirit of Springfield award – Jose da Silva!

Jose, before I give you your award, let's watch this short video.

Jose came from a long line of teachers and educators and moved to the United States in 1985 from Brazil. He worked as a Principle at Kelly Middle School in Eugene and spent 11 years at Marist as a coach, guidance counselor and dean. In an interview with the Springfield Times when you were first hired, you said “I like to refer to Springfield High as the best-kept secret, and the word now needs to be out.” Jose, you are doing just that. Congratulations on being our 2015 Spirit of Springfield award winner!

We’ve started one of the most anticipated projects in the recent past...

Downtown lighting – Decorative light posts with LED light fixtures will soon be installed along several blocks of Springfield’s downtown to improve safety, visibility, and aesthetics in the area. And, true to our Springfield practicality we are reusing light fixtures purchased from Southern California at a fraction of the cost of new.

### Community Survey

Last August we completed our 2014 community survey. The data we compile helps to ensure our government and our community are on the same page. What we have found is that the historic community values that we have surveyed for over the last decade (Safe neighborhoods, quality education and a healthy environment) are not only still important – but are more important than ever. Interestingly and by a wide margin, residents of Springfield are most proud of their community values and the hometown feel of our city.

## Library

For years our community had requested expanded hours for the library. We heard you and this last year we approved additional funding to open four additional hours a week! These additional hours help us meet the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century library. More and more across the nation libraries are becoming the information “hub and highway” for their community. A recent study states that “access to digital networks and digital network skills are essential for full participation in modern society ... and people without these skills or access ... are quickly left behind.” Our library can be at the center of these changes: a trusted community resource and an essential platform for learning, creativity, and innovation in the community.

We want our Library to be responsive to our community’s needs. To be strategically positioned to act as an early learning conduit into our schools; a place to provide worker training; as a wireless, broadband, access point for everyone, and finally, and most importantly, as an interactive, information hub, where people come to exchange ideas, learn about each other, and build a sense of community.

This involves activities as diverse as pre-school science and art programs, teen tech training, support for adults enrolling in health care programs, and seniors learning to download an e-book to their tablet. As our Library looks to the future we have to look to the future of our Library – as time, a growing population, and a changing world tell us that the current facility is nearing the end of its useful life. This is a discussion we would like to have with our community in the coming months.

## Events

The summer of 2014 was full of events:

## Graffiti

Over the summer the City of Springfield took to the EWEB bike path. I use this path frequently and for some time, it was a constant reminder of the impact graffiti has on community livability. Fences all along the path from 33<sup>rd</sup> Street to Pioneer Parkway were frequently targeted. Graffiti has a significant impact on both property values and safety in our neighborhoods. We reached out to community members and home owners along the path to collaborate and remove the graffiti. Armed with paint and paint brushes, within an afternoon, the graffiti was gone.

I want to thank those property owners for their collaboration to improve our Springfield neighborhoods.

## Police Canine Competition

Each year, Springfield Police host the Springfield Police K-9 Competition. Canine officers with their human police officer handlers compete in a series of obstacle course events designed to test the officers' ability to catch the bad guys. Last year there were 10 participants representing 5 departments. I am proud to say that Springfield won three of the five events, including overall "Top Dog" award. Held at Silke Field - more than 3,000 community members and supporters cheered on their favorite officers. The competition highlights our K-9 officers – who serve our community every day. This program is supported by the community and two community members donated \$10,000 for our new dog Falko who is now on the beat.

This year we lost one of those K9 officers. K9 Troll a five-year-old German Shepherd, who had served on the K9 unit with officer Brian Keetle passed away on Dec. 11 due to a medical condition. We thank K9 officer Troll for his service.

## Mill Race Celebration

This past July we recognized the successful completion of the Springfield Mill Race Restoration Project. This project creates a stable Mill Race inlet and improves habitat conditions.

The Nick Symmonds Springfield 800 returned for a third year - and a world record. Nick Symmonds set the new USATF Sanctioned time of 1:51 in a field with elite runners Andrew Wheating, Ben Blankenship and Tyler Mulder. We are happy to announce Nick plans to return again this year!

The inaugural Mayor's Soccer Tournament kicked off as a multicultural event bringing the universal language of soccer to Springfield. Thirteen teams competed over three days on the new fields at the Willamalane Sports Center. While this was a city event, it never would have happened without the hard work and dedication of Willamalane Staff and the staff at Travel Lane Co. Sports Commission.

But, even with all those events, the summer of 2014 will most likely be remembered for art.

The city sponsored the first ever Chalk Art Festival in Lane County with our partners from the Eugene Springfield Art Project.

And - this was the summer of the Simpsons, the year when we finally granted the show's creator, Matt Groening (Gray-ning), his life-long wish and accepted the mantel of "The REAL Springfield." Matt has said on several occasions that Springfield Oregon was his childhood inspiration for the show and over the years we have worked with 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox on ways to celebrate our small part in the show's success. In the end, art seemed to be the perfect venue and Matt agreed. He worked with us to create an image and then generously gifted that image to the City of Springfield. The mural and the event we held to dedicate it garnered international news. If you missed it, take a look...Video.

## Announcement of Kesey Mural –

We continue to see the benefit of the Simpsons mural as more people are experiencing downtown and get their picture taken in front of the mural. However, we don't want to rest on our past achievements.

In fact, today it is my pleasure to announce our next mural project. A project that will finally allow Springfield to embrace another pop-culture icon and author who lived his life a little closer to our home. In fact, his classmates at Springfield High School voted him most likely to succeed. He then did just that by writing two of our greatest American Novels and inspiring a generation of writers.

It is my pleasure to announce our 2015 City Art project is the Ken Kesey Mural.

The Kesey family have given the city their blessing for this project and it is my honor and pleasure to introduce members of the Kesey family here with us tonight Geneva Kesey Jolley (Ken's mother) - Sunshine Kesey (daughter) - Shannon Kesey Smith (daughter) - Sheryl Kesey Thompson (niece) and Sue Kesey (sister-in-law) thank you for being a part of this project!

The mural is slated for the Odd Fellows building in Downtown Springfield - the building that currently houses Planktown.

I would also like to recognize the members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellow, Springfield Chapter – whose building will be our canvas. Please stand and thank you. (they will stand as a group and not be individually named.)

We are excited for this new project, and hope the community will join us as we recognize Ken Kesey for his Springfield roots and his contributions to American culture.

#### Private sector projects

Moving our economy forward, we continue to see investment in Springfield both large and small. The Gateway area continues to evolve and bring economic improvements in our City. The Gateway Mall has begun a 43 million dollar renovation that includes construction of several outlying building pads along Gateway Street for additional retail businesses and restaurants. Construction within the main mall is also underway with new national retailers anticipated to come. We are thrilled to see this area continue to improve and eager to see the new additions that keep Gateway Mall a stop for both residents and visitors alike.

We are also moving nearer to completing a signature sculpture for the Gateway entrance to Springfield. The Springfield Flame concept is moving towards an installation over the next two years – and will serve as a beacon to those driving on I-5 – reminding them to add a stop in Springfield to their travel plans.

And Mid-Springfield is preparing for the estimated 80 million dollar expansion of McKenzie Willamette Hospital. We couldn't be more excited about their investment in our community.

These large projects grab most of the headlines, but it is our small businesses that continue to lead the way in Springfield. Throughout downtown, in Gateway, Thurston and in the increasingly popular section of Mid-Springfield – home of business owners known as the HAWKS - we are seeing entrepreneurs putting their

hopes and dreams into Springfield. Our partners at the Chamber of Commerce alone have cut the ribbon on more than 50 businesses in 2014.

One business in particular that captured my interest and respect this year is 100 Mile Bakery.

100 Mile Bakery is owned by Leda Hermecz (her-mitz) who started with a dream of bringing sustainable – local ingredients to the shared kitchen space at Sprout and now has moved and opened her expanded business in the Paramount shopping center.

And so, it is my pleasure to announce the 2015 Mayor's Business of the Year to Leda (Her-mitz) and 100 Mile Bakery. Thank you.

City Projects in Glenwood–

For years, many have referred to Glenwood as a diamond in the rough. I believe this is the year we will start to see Glenwood shine. Recently we have seen people willing to invest in Glenwood: Franz Bakery, BRING, Planned Parenthood and Candlewood Suites to name a few. After many years of planning, working with business and property owners, residents and our community partners, we are on the verge of seeing large scale public and private investment along the riverfront.

We will begin rebuilding Franklin Boulevard from just east of

I-5 to the bridges that lead to downtown Springfield later this year. At the same time, we hope to see the construction of a new hotel and conference center on the river begin this fall. There are plans for affordable housing built on Franklin as well as mixed use commercial and market rate housing planned for the surrounding area. These important private investments will be accompanied by quality streets, sidewalks, park space and a riverfront bike and pedestrian path that will allow and

encourage access to a beautiful one mile stretch of urban riverfront that is mostly hidden from us now.

**UGB:** After several years of planning, public outreach and engagement, I expect that the City Council will take the final steps to adopt a new urban growth boundary for the City later this year. This expansion will allow us to have adequate land for the jobs our community will need for the next twenty plus years.

## BUDGET –

To see our plans come to fruition, Springfield must be financially stable.

Financing our city remains a challenge, but we continue to find new ways of doing things. For example the FIRE MERGER was officially completed on August 4, 2014. The Eugene Springfield Fire Department is now a fully shared service between the cities of Springfield and Eugene saving more than a million and a half dollars.

We have a long history of being fiscally responsible while meeting the most important needs of the community. Balancing the budget each year requires establishing priorities and being willing to evaluate how we provide services to the community. I am confident that the City Council, with the assistance of the citizen members of the Budget Committee, is up to the task. As we come out of the recession we will have many important decisions to make regarding investments in our community. Investing in the maintenance of streets will be a priority of mine in 2015. I look forward to working with the Lane County Commissioners and the

State Legislature as we work towards finding the money needed to adequately maintain and enhance our streets.

### Thanks you and Conclusion

With all that we have accomplished and all that we plan to get done, it's time it say thank you. Taking care of Springfield starts with our City Council and I want to thank them first. It is my pleasure to serve with Councilors Sean VanGordan, Hillary Wylie, Sheri Moore, Dave Ralston, Marilee Woodrow and Joe Pishioneri. Please stand and be recognized.

I want to thank both our state delegation and our federal partners for working so hard to ensure that the policies and projects important to our community move forward at the state and federal level. Thank you Senator Lee Beyer, Representative John Lively, Representative Peter DeFazio, and Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley. I look forward to working with you again this coming year. Please stand and be recognized

Thank you to our partners on the Springfield School board, The Willamalane Board and Springfield Utility board. Please stand and be recognized

Thank you to our partners at Lane County including Springfield Commissioner Sid Leiken and the full County Board – We look forward to working with you this year. And thank you to Mayor Piercy and our partners at the City of Eugene. Please stand and be recognized

A huge thanks to City Manager Gino Grimaldi and all of the City of Springfield staff, you have done nothing less than a stellar job. To everyone working for the City, thank you for helping make Springfield such a great place live, work and play. Please stand and be recognized Conclusion

As we take care of Springfield and each other, we are growing our success.

Each one of us is part of that success and should be proud of what we have accomplished and where we are headed.

We are working together, sharing the vision, and moving forward at a steady pace.

We are working together to maintain our hometown feel; a place where everyone feels welcome and appreciated.

We all share the opportunity to take care of Springfield, in many ways every single day.

Let's keep it that way. Springfield is our hometown.