



2022 State of the City Address January 6, 2022

I am pleased to report to you today that the State of the City of Ammon is sound, and it is in better condition than it has ever been. We have made significant improvements in many areas of our great city. It has not been without challenges, but I truly believe that we have seen many a mountain over the past few years and have determinedly decided to overcome them. With creativity and conviction, we will continue to conquer all of our mountains.

For example, Ammon saw a looming issue with water rights, water infrastructure, and fairness in funding. The challenge was daunting. When we determined that we should each pay for the water we use through metering, we were approximately 65% completed with installation of meters throughout the city. You may recall that we initially saw at that time a path to completion that would have encompassed up to 6 years. But through dogged determination, ingenuity and hard work on the part of the entire city, but mostly from the city water department, we will complete full metering of the entire city this Spring. Along these same lines, we are working with engineers to do a new analysis of our water study, which we anticipate will be out this year and will give us an even better understanding of what we have, and what we need.

Another example of a mountain we have climbed has been our fiber optics. Ammon is a great story of what amazing things a small city can do. We have been on the path of installing municipal fiber for five years. We have small but efficient and able crews who have now brought us into LID 5. Once LID 5 is completed, we are anticipating needing one more LID in order to have pulled fiber into every neighborhood in the city. This is really incredible for a city the size of Ammon. Ammon Fiber is also still the least expensive municipal fiber in the country and has hit 1500+ total installs, and we're just getting started. Our fiber team estimates that by the end of 2022, 65% of all Ammon homes will have access to Ammon Fiber.

We also recently saw and climbed the mountain that is our fire protection in the city. We recognized that Ammon's tax revenues could not keep up with Ammon's growth, so we made a bold change to join the Bonneville County Fire District. That decision has been a good move for Ammon, and our firefighters and fire department (they are still our firefighters) are doing better

than they ever have before. I am proud of our determination to improve in that area, which will continue to pay dividends well into the future.

We are in the process of traversing the mountain that is street funding. Streets have needed an additional revenue source for some time. But we made a significant improvement by leading the way on sales tax revenue sharing reform. Because of HB408 being signed into law, the City anticipates an over 30% increase in state sales tax distribution. I am committed to putting this significant increase into street maintenance and rebuild. And that increase will just continue to go up in the years to come. More discussion needs to happen on street funding, to be sure, but this is a fantastic start up this particular mountain.

And with that same conviction we will climb the mountain that is our sewer treatment. We have known since the very beginning that a sewer district was necessary. We have gone through tremendous challenge and some opposition to get to this point, but now we are ready to pass a sewer district for our EIRWWA customers. This change will bring about better representation for Ammon residents and, over time, a better functioning and better operational system, with better opportunities for funding and growth. This change to a sewer district will not come with any price tag for our residents, but will simply be a vast improvement in structure and operation. And I am confident that we will find great partnerships with the State of Idaho and Department of Environmental Quality as we plan for a needed plant expansion that will double the capacity. We are climbing this mountain and I can see the other side—we will be successful. This is the most important mountain we are climbing in 2022.

In 2021, we also had some major accomplishments worth noting. We submitted, for the very first time in Ammon history, five projects for federal road grant funding to BMPO, and two of them having to do with improvements to 17th Street were approved. We made significant improvements to Woodland Hills Park, which is now our largest park after having acquired the ballfields at the corner of Ammon and 49th, with more improvements to come. Speaking of which, we FINALLY made Ammon and 49th a four-way stop, again, with more improvements to that intersection forthcoming.

In addition to Woodland Hills, we have also acquired Hawks Landing Park and have made additional improvements to McCowin Park by adding flag poles for memorial events. It is still my desire to have a veterans memorial at that location in the future.

We have committed to pathway funding, especially in areas of town where it is extremely needed. In that light, we have designed and applied for LHTAC grant funding for a pathway that would run along 21st Street and another that would run along 49th. We have also agreed to walking path access along all of Progressive Irrigation canal banks—which is huge in this regard. With more to come after that, with the goal to make Ammon a very walkable and bikeable city.

We have seen the need for and the attraction of our new Urban Renewal District, which is starting to bear fruit. I believe that it will turn out to be one of the best commercial and mixed use developments in the city when it is built out, and soon will bring us connectivity along John Adams and Curlew that will be so desperately needed for our community.

We have designed and pushed forward with seeking grant funding for 1st Street, which is still the top street priority for the city. I am confident that, as we focus on this project like a laser beam—especially with recently-passed federal infrastructure funding—we will find the resources needed to complete this very important project.

We have taken this drive, initiative and vision to pushing forward with analysis of a new pool facility for Ammon. The residents of Ammon have caught that vision, and formed a pool committee and obtained survey results and an excellent study. We can't let that initiative die down—we will continue to discuss ways to move toward a new pool facility in the months to come.

We have received nearly \$4 million in grant funding for sewer, water, and broadband projects, which will move us faster toward our goals in those areas.

We are moving forward with the design of a city hall remodel, which we have known would be necessary for many years now.

We continue to have some of the best local events in East Idaho, highlighted by Ammon Days and the new Light-A-Palooza event. Not to mention the Icy Inferno bonfire event which is coming up on January 22.

We brought on some great new talent in the city, with a new Technology and Fiber Director and a new Code Enforcement Officer.

We have the lowest tax levy in the state for a city of our size, and with growth that tax levy continues to drop for our residents. In this vein, 17 new commercial businesses opened in Ammon in 2021, with 7 commercial remodels and 193 new single family homes. Ammon is a place where people want to live and want to do business, and it will continue to be so into the future.

And, I would be remiss if I did not discuss our great efforts in improving our comprehensive plan and zoning codes. This was a struggle, but we improved Title 10 with design review, are making successful use of Conditional Use Agreements, added an RS zone to create more affordable housing opportunities, and vastly improved our conditions for approving multi-family housing in Ammon.

Finally, I want to greatly thank the men and women who make up this great community. We have great elected officials who give a lot of their time, skills and effort toward improvement of the city. We have dedicated department heads and talented staff who are experts in their fields. I am complimented on a regular basis on the work they do. I can say without hesitation that these men and women do what they do because they care deeply about Ammon's success. And I think we are all honored to be a part of this effort.

It is almost poetic that we are renaming the street entrance into Woodland Hills Park after Bonneville County's highest mountain, Mount Baird. We have many mountains to climb, but once you've climbed a few successfully it becomes easier to see the end from the beginning. Taking this metaphor literally, I am not a mountain climber—afraid of heights. But I'm proud of the ones we've climbed together, and look forward to traversing more to come alongside all of you. Thank you, and let's have a great 2022!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sean J. Colvin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular flourish at the end.