

**Remarks by Councilmember Tim Burgess, Seattle City Council  
Selection as Council President  
Seattle, Washington**

January 6, 2014

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Together, as we face this New Year, I believe we have one primary imperative . . . to build the public's trust and confidence in their city government.

That's important because, more and more, people see government as ineffective, out of touch with everyday needs, unable to get things done.

Councilmember Clark, in your time on the Council, and especially these past two years as president, you helped create an environment where we could demonstrate that local government in Seattle is different. As Council president you made sure that we remained focused on progressive, pragmatic and effective results.

You served all of us well, especially during times of conflict with the executive side of city government. You never lost your patience, dignity, humor or wise and careful pragmatism. You never wavered in your commitment to serving the common good.

As you have counseled me, the job of Council president is really about being a leader among equals. You fulfilled that role exceptionally well and we got things done. On behalf of all of us, thank you.

Working together as a legislative body, even with our different individual interests and styles, this Council has accomplished amazing things for our city through the initiatives that we launched:

- We created the **rental housing inspection program** to make sure people are safe in their homes.
- We provided **paid sick and safe leave** so everyone can care for themselves and their family members.
- We expanded the **Nurse Family Partnership** so that all first-time, low-income moms and their babies can lead happy and healthy lives.
- We started the important work of making **high-quality universal preschool** available to all of Seattle's children.
- We formed the **Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs** to assist our new American neighbors.
- We created a downtown **Tourism Improvement Area** to showcase Seattle to the world and speed the recovery of the hospitality and hotel sector.
- We crafted **job assistance legislation** to help released offenders restart their lives.

- We created an **economic development commission** to ensure that our city remains competitive in the global economy.
- We increased funding for **emergency food and housing services**.
- And because we want the best results for our most vulnerable residents, we have insisted on **higher accountability standards and measurable results** for our social service programs.

Stepping back and reviewing this list, this is solid municipal governance. It's work we can be very proud of. It's trust-building work.

So, as the other Washington struggles to get things done, we can govern differently here in Seattle.

**Working together** with our new Mayor, Ed Murray, with our new member, Kshama Sawant, and with our partners across the region, we can make our city an even better place where everyone has an opportunity to live, work, learn, play and raise a family.

**Working together**...we can create high-quality preschool for all of our children.

**Working together**...we can craft a plan for a bold and fair minimum wage and begin to address the dangerous trend of increasing income inequality.

**Working together**...we can create more affordable housing for our workers.

**Working together**...we can speed sustainable reform of our police department and rebuild the morale of our officers who want to serve with distinction and who are very eager for clear and effective leadership from us and from their commanders.

Building public trust also means taking care of the basics.

It means demonstrating that we are investing the people's tax dollars effectively. It means we are providing oversight to the delivery of basic city services, like making sure our drinking water is clean, the electricity comes on when you flip the switch, the firefighters arrive quickly when you need help, and our roads are well maintained. It also means we are compensating our city employees fairly, and ensuring that our pension system rests on a sustainable footing for future generations of City employees.

Being in public service is a privilege. I know all nine of us will work hard and will work together to make decisions that benefit all of the people of Seattle. That's the work that will earn the public's trust and confidence.

So, let's get to work.