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## Bosse Delivers A 'Healthy' State Of The City Address



By Victoria Talbot

Beverly Hills Mayor Lili Bosse and more than 400 friends celebrated a resoundingly healthy "State of the City" on Wednesday at Greystone

mansion Wednesday night.

The record-breaking attendance was perhaps the only surprise of the evening. Mayor Bosse's unbridled enthusiasm is the hallmark of her popularity and her appeal was center stage as she reiterated her "Healthy City" initiative as a business proposition for the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce.

The event, hosted by the chamber, featured hors d'oeuvres and wine served on the terrace overlooking the grounds at Greystone. The "State of the City" address was

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## STATE OF THE CITY

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in the main garden on a perfect late summer evening. The event was so popular that parking quickly filled up. Guests were shuttled from the street to the mansion.

Among those in attendance was a brief appearance by State Sen. Ted Lieu, candidate for the 33rd Congressional District race.

Councilmember Nancy Krasne and Vice Mayor Julian Gold, City Manager Jeff Kolin, BHPD Chief Dave Snowden, BHFD Chief Ralph Mundell, City Clerk Byron Pope, Community Development Director Susan Healy Keene, and Community Services Director Steve Zoet joined Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Alexander Stettinski to welcome the mayor.

Bosse spoke of her "Healthy City" initiative as meaning a city that has healthy people, healthy businesses and a healthy government.

In the Walk with the Mayor, a weekly feature of her "Healthy City" campaign, Bosse said: "We have formed an enthusiastic, new Beverly Hills family of hundreds of local walkers . . . who support our businesses. We are attracting new customers while reinforcing our unique brand of positive, community-building."

She is sending out a letter to every restaurant to encourage healthy menu options with a "Healthy City" decal to display for participants.

Bosse mentioned businesses she has visited on the Walks with the Mayor and those that have been highlighted in her "60-Second Shout-Outs" at City Council meetings.

The mayor presented some controversial projects with a positive growth spin, including the 9900 Building, formerly the Robinsons-May.

Bosse said that the Wanda Group, the new owners of the property, closed escrow on Tuesday and will be pursuing the completion of the 235-luxury condominiums that have been approved for the site.

She mentioned the Waldorf Astoria, and said that construction preparations are to be completed by December; the new hotel is scheduled to open in 2018.

The good news is that Burberry on

Rodeo Drive will be complete just in time for the holidays. Department stores Barneys New York and Neiman Marcus are to be undergoing major renovations.

The City has hired new building inspectors and is working towards making more online permitting for more than the current 30-percent of permits issued.

The City, said Bosse, has completed the in lieu parking study and is working to create more flexible parking to meet the City's needs.

"Business tax generates 20-percent of our General Fund's revenues, a figure possibly unmatched anywhere," said Bosse. "The TOT (Transit Occupancy Tax) generates 18-percent and the sales tax, 15-percent. Property taxes are 24-percent."

"Our CFO Don Rhodes, our City Treasurer Eliot Finkel and our bottom line all agree: the City is doing great. We are in robust financial health. Our tax base is well-diversified, revenue growth is steady, expenditure growth is moderate and our reserves are fully-funded."

Bosse said that the surpluses, "are conservatively projected to continue for at least five years out."

The Mayor also addressed the City's unfunded liabilities. "This is a very real financial issue facing many cities and it has also become a hot political topic. We are very aware and proactive in how we are approaching this obligation," she said. "Our unfunded liability is money that will be coming due over the next few decades to pay for City employee pensions - some projections indicate an amount over \$200 million."

The City allocated \$2 million towards that fund in the last fiscal year and plans to do that again this year.

Bosse spotlighted the ongoing upgrades on the City's parking structures, the restoration of the Beverly Gardens Park, and the renovation of Roxbury Park as the City undergoes a "facelift."

"For a 100-year-old, Beverly Hills is looking pretty great."