Dear City Colleagues –

Today marks our first year in the Mayor’s Office, and I want to thank you for your partnership and commitment to delivering a world-class city where everyone matters.

I am proud and humbled to serve with all of you. It is an honor to lead this city – this city that raised and inspired me, this city I have called home my entire life.

Together, with hard work and determination – with a Denver spirit – we have made great progress over the past year. As I reported to the community during my first State of the City Address earlier today, Denver is safe, fiscally stable and establishing itself as a hub of innovation – a smart city that is attracting new residents, businesses and visitors every day.

During the past 12 months – together, with all of you – we began laying the foundation for a better, faster, stronger Denver:

- **SUPPORTING KIDS** – We placed a renewed emphasis on Denver’s children by creating the Denver Education Compact, increasing access to the Internet, and providing meals to tens of thousands of low-income kids.

- **GROWING JOBS** – We strengthened Denver’s economy by partnering with small businesses and large employers alike, launching a new international flight to Iceland and securing a new route to Tokyo, winning a new U.S. Patent and Trade Office and beginning to plan for an “aerotropolis” around DIA.

- **KEEPING DENVER SAFE** – We began building new relationships between the public and the Police Department with a new Safety Manager and Police Chief, and by getting more officers out of the office and back into our neighborhoods, while we are also paving a way home for those hit hardest by the recession.

- **IMPROVING GOVERNMENT** – We improved customer service and made government more efficient and cost-effective through new initiatives like Peak Performance, and, thanks to you, starting in 2013 these new efficiencies will save $10 million annually.

- **SUSTAINING DENVER** – We positioned Denver to become a leader in urban agriculture by launching Denver Seeds, growing a fresh-food economy that will lead to new jobs and greater access to healthy, locally grown food in every neighborhood.
I’m proud of all we’ve accomplished together over the past year. CLICK HERE to read an impressive and comprehensive report outlining our successes.

I’m also extremely optimistic about the future. At today’s State of the City speech, I announced several new initiatives we will be launching in the year ahead:

- A new pilot program that enhances school ID cards to also serve as library cards and provide free access to city recreation centers. This fall, 34,000 Denver Public Schools 6th- through 12th-graders will receive these enhanced cards.

- “e-Denver,” a new online initiative that will allow citizens and companies to do business with the city 24 hours a day, including obtaining construction permits and paying taxes.

- “Peak Enterprise,” a new business-development toolkit that will help increase access to capital, enhance workforce opportunities and much more to aid our small businesses and local companies as they compete in a global economy.

- The Rose Andom Domestic Violence Center, which will provide comprehensive support – legal, counseling, shelter options, resources for children and pets, and medical care – for victims of domestic violence under one roof.

We have accomplished much together, setting a strong foundation to deliver a smart city. But the reality is we face more tough choices and difficult decisions this coming year. We’re projecting a $94 million shortfall in the 2013 budget while costs and the demand for services continue to rise.

That’s why I will be introducing a fiscally responsible and balanced plan to the City Council, and the people of Denver, to eliminate the City’s structural budget deficit and restore the ground we lost during the recession. With voter permission, we would keep the $68 million we return to the public every year to stay below the TABOR limit, and begin to reinvest in Denver’s children, libraries, police, streets and businesses.

It has been a privilege to serve with you the past 12 months, and I’m excited about the work ahead.

Together, we can continue to build a smart city for all our citizens, a world-class city where everyone matters.

Respectfully,

Michael B. Hancock
Mayor