

Esteemed guests, dear citizens of Tampere,

Happy 241<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Tampere!

Do you know the feeling, when a song captures your emotions so clearly that it leaves a special impression? On Tampere Day, many such songs come to mind that give a homely feeling about Tampere. The song that has been playing in my ears more than any other in the past few days is Mansesteri's song "Tampere":

Tammerkosken sillalla  
Raikaa lauluni  
Tampere, helmi mesta  
Rakkain kaupunki

Right now it feels great to cross the familiar bridge over Tammerkoski rapids, as the statues have returned to the Hämeensilta bridge, silhouettes of the new arena and high-rise buildings come into view and Hämeenkatu street's new look is starting to emerge after the tramline construction work. Soon, the shot tower will also return to its place in Pispala. The historical Tampere and the new Tampere are shaking hands.

In the previous council term, we made major decisions about developments in the city, such as the tunnel, the tram, the arena, the fusion of three universities and the construction of a smart city by tapping into the strong ICT operators in the area. They were long-sighted decisions that will move the city a long way into the future. Construction projects have, however, also cast their shadows on this council term ending next year. It has been a time of putting those decisions into action and the whole city has resembled one big construction site. It has been a hard time in many ways, but the light is shining at the end of the tunnel. Next year will be meaningful, when we get to jump on the tram and head to events at the arena. The city will come out of its construction site shell.

Our view into the future is otherwise cloudy, since coronavirus has cast a shadow on Tampere and the lives of its citizens. It has taught us to appreciate public services, open decision-making and preparedness. We had to change education, early childhood education and healthcare and social welfare services on a tight schedule. I want to use

this opportunity to thank those professionals for their flexibility and tremendous work in the middle of a crisis once again. In the spring, it was difficult to make predictions, as it still is now. It is clear however, that cities' role in securing services and providing assistance is important and that it will only be emphasised in difficult situations like these. Every one of us has to be able to trust that we will receive help when we truly need it. No one must be left alone.

Many businesses are also facing a difficult situation. I still believe that work, entrepreneurship and appreciation of entrepreneurs will grow as a result of the crisis. We understand now that the long-serving book shop in our block can no longer be taken for granted. Behind that shop is an entrepreneur who works long days and to whom the coronavirus crisis has shown its darkest side. Without customers, these local enterprises fall when their flow of revenue declines or even dries up completely. Every one of us can have a positive effect on this with our every-day choices and by favouring local businesses.

The epidemic's effects reach far and wide to different areas. For the tourism, restaurant, events and experience industries, this has been a nearly fatal year. How can we encourage the citizens of Tampere to go to events, concerts and theatres once again? As an events hub and cultural city, it is important for us to find safe solutions.

At the same time, it has been great to see how some of Tampere's know-how and companies have risen to a central role in creating solutions amidst the coronavirus situation. Vaccine research, protective equipment as well as the Koronavilkku application have happened here. Absolutely marvellous!

Particularly today, I feel a special pride in the new innovations for one, but also in the companies that have written our city's success story from one generation to another, renewing themselves and creating continuity.

Businesses should not be taken for granted, however. The city must bear some burden so that businesses, services and structures keep on rolling. We cannot afford the kind of large scale shutdown that we had in the spring. We must find hybrid solutions together.

Clear official guidelines and advice that come in good time are key. We must collaborate effectively with local businesses and entrepreneurs. The future of Tampere's wellbeing and vitality rests on their shoulders.

Esteemed citizens of Tampere,

This year, the chosen theme for Tampere Day's award ceremony is vitality and entrepreneurship.

Finland lives from work and entrepreneurship, courage and know-how. For these, Tampere is known today and in the future.

Finally, I wish to raise a toast to all of Tampere's doers, because the future is built together. The city of Tampere should not be seen just as an administration that is led from City Hall. It is much more than that and it is built by all of us: you and me, companies and communities, every day.

Tampere is an attitude. It lives in all of us and has pushed its roots deep into the ridge landscape. Here, on the rapid's banks, ideas have always been born. They have generated work – even whole communities.

When one set of machines has quietened down, new ideas have soon filled the silence. Bolts of cloth have been replaced with strings of code and memorable experiences.

A promise of things to come has been planted in these rugged brick walls and rows of windows that climb ever higher. Even though the silhouette of the city changes, the atmosphere is always familiar.

**This is home.**

**Congratulations Tampere!**

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Dear friends,

Today, we are celebrating Tampere Day and those awarded today here at Tampere City Hall to the tunes played by the Tampere Philharmonic Salon Orchestra with the bass-baritone Juha Uusitalo as the soloist. This event will be broadcast live online so that we can share this moment of celebration with all the citizens of Tampere. Next, we have the joy and honour of presenting the 2020 Tampere Day Award and honorary gold medals.

Have a wonderful evening!