

MAYOR SHAYNE R. GALLO
STATE OF THE CITY
2015



MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS FOR 2015

Four years ago, when I was sworn into office, I stated our City had become a "Tale of Two Cities," balkanized and separated into three (3) neighborhoods and business districts with our City government disconnected from most, if not all, stakeholders in our City.

Why? At the time, our City was a "victim" of: A nation-wide assault by corporate thugs and indifferent elected officials in Washington, DC, causing a meltdown in the Housing and Financial sectors of the economy. The "assault" by Corporate America and indifference by our federal elected officials created a national economic malaise has significantly affected our State and Regional economy and literally polarizing the nation.

In 2012, when I took office, I referred to our City having potential to be a "Model City." I stated in order to succeed as a "Model City" we must change the culture within our City government. For our City to be a "Model City" such can only occur if there is a partnership with all of our Stakeholders in our community. To be successful as a "Model City" we must establish a partnership of all our stakeholders to address quality of life, public safety and ancient crumbling infrastructure that have, for far too long, stagnated our City's growth and economic development to be a "Model City"!

I vowed to implement a new paradigm for governing and for providing services to the public. I stated we must, with a partnership of all stakeholders, restructure, reinvest and require more from our government to be transparent, accountable, accessible, efficient and open to be more accessible for business investment and to ensure our government acts on behalf of the public interest.

At last year's State of the City message, I noted the Mayor holds up a mirror for all our City to look into. What we see, depends on what we all do as stakeholders in our partnership to work together to make our City a "Model City".

Past or in the present, when we look into our "community mirror", we should all be proud of what we have accomplished from our partnership and now

recognize “History Is Just Our Beginning”. So to the “naysayers” take a look..see what our partnership has achieved. Please come on..join us and be a stakeholder in our partnership to make our City a “Model City”.

A NEW PARADIGM FOR GOVERNING OUR CITY

I am pleased to report because of our partnership we have established, we are now managing our government as a business and similar to all our stakeholders, as they would manage their households.

For each budget year, I have presented to our City Council transparent, accountable and modified zero-based budgets. For each budget each department head was required to review each budget line item and demonstrate factually a benefit and/or savings for our taxpayers. In addition, the implementation of a time and attendance policy has resulted in not allowing overpayments of accrued leave or fraud to occur.

The cuts, savings and consolidation of City services from all our City budgets and refinancing of the City’s long-term debt, monitoring overtime, limiting the purchase of equipment and supplies (unless savings resulting from said purchase), curtailing professional consulting services have had a substantial positive impact on our 2015 Budget.

I am very proud of my administration for under the guidance of Comptroller John Tuey, cooperation from our department heads and City personnel who are doing more for less and more efficiently providing services, have enabled our City to comply with the NYS two percent (2%) property tax cap and NYS Property Tax Freeze Credit Program. This is so notwithstanding 88 cents of every taxpayer dollars is non-discretionary unfunded mandates!

The City’s credit rating (Moody) was upgraded to “Double A-Minus”. Thank you Comptroller Tuey, all department heads and employees for your dedication and commitment to the public interest.

The public should be pleased that due to the City’s upgraded Moody credit rating, we have obtained lower interest rates for bonding of capital projects and

equipment at lower costs which is necessary for our City to continue to address Quality of Life/Infrastructure which facilitates economic development.

When I took office all the union collective bargaining agreements had expired. In the 2015 Budget there is funding for settlement of two (2) of the City's public employee contracts; the CSEA Local 1000 and Kingston Paid Professional Firefighters. I want to reiterate both of these public employee unions should be commended for their good faith, cooperation and willingness to settle contracts which are not only fair to their members, but in the public's interest.

We all know the costs associated with our public employee contracts simply cannot be sustained by the taxpayers. Therefore, the public should be assured in prospective contract negotiations the City shall seek further operational and benefit concessions to achieve savings of limited resources (76 cents of every dollar covers personnel and benefit costs, part of the 88 cents of the unfunded mandates our City must pay annually).

To reiterate, the public should know CSEA and Kingston Paid Professional Firefighters cooperated with the City in contract negotiations assuring the public interest is considered!

At this time, the City and Kingston Police Benevolent Association (KPBA) have tentatively come to an agreement (the first offer of settlement was rejected by union members). The KPBA had declared impasse with NYS PERB last year. Nonetheless, the 2015 Budget includes funding for a prospective settlement of the PBA contract.

My administration shall continue to have meaningful discussions with all public employee unions in an effort to reach prospective agreements that are both fair to our employees and fair financially responsible and sustainable for our City.

To our City Assessor, Dan Baker and his staff, thank you. Our Assessor has saved 100,000's of taxpayer dollars with fair settlement of tax certiorari/grievance claims. Mr. Baker has professionalized and implemented changes in our

Assessor's Office to provide more efficient service and information for all our taxpayers.

To further ensure our City government is transparent and accessible for all, I am pleased to report the City webpage has been upgraded without any additional tax dollars being spent! Thank you Kyle McIntosh, our City IT Director! The City also has Facebook pages for City Arts Council K365 and most City departments.

In addition, at a very nominal cost, our City has now implemented an emergency alert system-phone app providing notification of emergencies (i.e., snow, water boil, etc.). This is very important for notifying the public, particularly our seniors and those without online service, in a timely manner of any emergency. Thank you Council persons Ball, Mills and Brown for your hard work regarding this initiative!

Prospectively, we shall continue to govern under the paradigm of restructuring government to be transparent, accessible and fair for all. We must stay the course and explore all opportunities to reduce costs through efficiency in operations and doing more for less.

We must continue to implement, when feasible, operational cost savings through improved technology (i.e., single stream refuse and recycling and conversion of our street light fixtures throughout our City to a more efficient cost effective LED technology).

We must continue restructuring our government through consolidation of services within our City government (Registrar and Economic Development \$135,000 savings) and with other political subdivisions (i.e., City-County 911/Tourism for over \$160,000 plus savings annually).

We must continue where feasible to review the City's insurance costs.

We must continue to review the City's existing debt for cost savings and for restructuring of our City debt.

We must continue to market our City as a destination for cultural and recreational tourism which provides our City with necessary sales tax revenue.

Obviously, we must continue to pursue investment in infrastructure and other initiatives to expand the City tax base and for addressing quality of life, health, safety, welfare and facilitate economic development.

We must continue our partnership to invest in quality of life, building safety and zoning code enforcement, parks and recreation, public works-infrastructure and public safety to keep our residents and businesses from leaving and to attract new residents and businesses to our City.

The restructuring and investment in the Building and Safety Division-Zoning under the leadership of Chief Mark Brown has resulted in enhanced, more responsive enforcement of the Building and Zoning Code. Also, the same has resulted in more efficient use of our precious tax dollars!

The dedication of personnel to inspect multiple dwellings, unsafe, dilapidated and vacant buildings has had a significant effect on our City's quality of life and facilitated investment in areas of our City riddled with "urban blight".

The hiring of a bilingual part-time code enforcement officer dedicated to enforcement in Midtown without any impact on our City tax rate----- This employee has assisted staff with inspections, vacant-unsafe and dilapidated buildings and the posting of properties only in our Midtown area.

The continuation of Block by Block in conjunction with other City departments has resulted in not only holding more accountable property owners but effected quality of life and the market value of properties in neighborhoods throughout our City.

Also we must continue coordination between Building and Safety, Zoning, Planning, Historical Landmark Preservation, Heritage Area Commission, Corporation Counsel and Assessor's Office.

I am pleased our City Council acknowledged my request to re-adopt the vacant property code provisions permitting the City to assess a penalty upon property owners who do not occupy and/or rent their properties for several years; the City did not collect such fines or penalty fees due to an administrative error resulting in said code provision being deleted from our City Charter.

The initiative proposed by my administration to more efficiently and timely enforce the unsafe and dilapidated building code provisions was adopted by the City Council 2 years ago. I am pleased to report my administration's initiative has been very successful and overwhelmingly accepted by our residents and businesses.

In 2014, the City spent a little over \$100,000 to demolish 12 buildings and saved approximately \$100,000 plus due to property owners and financial institutions incurring costs for demolition. In addition, 4 properties subject to said code provisions, were renovated by property owners saving costs commensurate with demolition.

The personnel of the Kingston Fire Department Building and Safety Division-Zoning should be recognized for their contribution to not only improving the City's quality of life but increasing the market value of properties, facilitating insurance for some property owners, increasing assessed value of the property and for addressing the source of "urban blight" in our neighborhoods throughout our City.

I would also like to thank the City Council for supporting my administration's initiative by amending our City code provisions and for the funding for the demolition of properties throughout our City!

Simply put, the City Council and my administration must continue to invest in code enforcement throughout our City. It is imperative we do this to insure we keep our residents and businesses and attract new residents and businesses to invest in our City.

We must continue to invest in our City park system and recreational public facilities and infrastructure. Over 8,750 people per year are served by our parks and public facilities and over 55,000 people annually visit our Nature Center at Forsyth Park.

Investment in our park system is necessary for not only providing an experience to enjoy the natural beauty of our City, but to insure our youth, seniors and

adults have a variety of recreational, educational and cultural activities to productively occupy their time.

It is imperative we make such an investment because it is not only the right thing to do for our community but the more humane and effective use of tax dollars than spending on prison, jails, probation and parole programs.

I am proud my administration has invested in almost \$1 million dollars in our parks and public facilities. This is the largest expenditure of taxpayer dollars in the history of our City from grant funding, CDBG, NYS DEC Estuary Program.

Some of the initiatives planned and in the process of implementation are: new bathrooms (with some replaced with solar powered composting toilets), new playground upgrades, amenities for VanBuren Street Playground, new bike racks and benches installed, Hasbrouck Park Playground partnership with KSD, Capital improvements for Rondout Center, Hodge Center, Carriage House at Hodge, Andrea Pool, ball fields, roof for Nature Center and Hutton Park, fishing pier, kayak launch, Rondout Center now open year-round, Bike education-safety programs, movies in the parks and senior intergenerational programs.

We must continue to invest our CDBG and other funding (from corporate and private foundations) in the Hodge, Rondout Center and pursue Capital Plan projects for improvements to exterior and interior of the Andy Murphy Midtown Neighborhood Center.

Thank you Kevin Gilfeather, Director of Parks and Recreation, your personnel and the Bruderhof for their contribution to improving quality of life and offering programs and services resulting in benefits for all in our City!

To address our residents and business concerns, improve their quality of life and to reconnect all to our City government, I have established a Council for Seniors, the Arts, Businesses, Veterans and ad-hoc with our City's clergy. All of these "stakeholders" included in our partnership have assisted our City with the cultural, recreational, educational initiatives that have moved our City forward to be a "model city". Thank you to all of those who volunteer their time on the councils established by my administration four (4) years ago.

To continue creating a collective vision for a healthy City and to be a “Model City”, my administration has created “The Live Well Coalition” (President Obama’s wife Michelle was recognized with several awards) in conjunction with Kingston Parks and Recreation, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County, Health Alliance, Ulster County BOCES, Ulster County Health Department and Institute for Family Health. The mission of The Living Well Coalition is to educate our residents about healthy life style choices regarding nutrition, recreation, work, play, healing and aging.

The Live Well Coalition also includes Complete Streets Advisory Council, Bike Friendly Kingston and Kingston Land Trust Rail Trail Committee.

Also, our Senior Council established by my administration has implemented with Community Action (Mike Lamoree) and Reverend Darlene Kelly of Clinton Avenue United Methodist Church and Bruderhof, food pantries at our senior residences in our City. We are expanding the food distribution throughout our City with the assistance of the aforesaid and other faith based and not-for-profit service providers (People’s Place, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army and Pointe of Praise).

My administration is currently meeting with the food pantry/soup kitchen service providers noted above to form a food pantry/soup kitchen council. We are also planning a Food Expo for a discussion on hunger and benefit to assist those in need. Hopefully, from the formation of said council, we can provide more humanely and efficiently food distribution for those in need and avoid competition among service providers for resources, funding and volunteers.

For several years now the Public Works Department has operated/provided services with less personnel, in some instances, 15-20 year old equipment and financial resources. This means there are now less personnel and resources to pick up our yard waste, recyclables, repair roads, sewers, sidewalks, curbing and all infrastructure, replace light fixtures/street lights. Simply put, it means it is more difficult to provide services that are required for a city to succeed.

Given the circumstances, the Public Works Department deserves credit for their hard work and commitment to making our city a great place for all to live, work, invest and play! The personnel under the direction of Superintendent Schupp, are all doing more work with less resources to get the work done.

In 2011, Mayor Sottile introduced the single stream recycling to curbside (tote) pick up. Mayor Sottile's foresight has resulted in significant savings on our tipping fees with the UCRRA. In addition, Mayor Sottile's initiative included the purchase of new automated trucks used for refuse and recycling pick up. Mayor Sottile should also be credited with the refuse tote initiative.

In 2010, DPW was picking up 10 tons of recycling each week. Currently, an average of 50 tons per week is being collected through the single stream initiative. A financial impact with an anticipated cost savings of roughly \$175,000.00 per year in tipping fees.

The totes now being used city-wide for recycling helps to keep litter off the streets and it adds to stream lining pickup operations. During 2014 DPW crews rolled out 1500 new refuse totes that were approved and purchased during my administration. This is yet another cost saving measure as it will help to remove water weight from the waste stream for future savings of tax revenue. Open containers now being used allows rain water and snow to accumulate in the container which we pay for in tipping fees.

In the 2015 Budget Capital Plan I have recommended \$50,000 for refuse totes. It is anticipated by 2016-2017 these totes shall be available for all residents who have not received in 2015 totes for their refuse pickup.

The single stream recycling effort was completed on schedule in 2013. As stated above, we are requesting \$50,000 in funding to continue implementation of refuse totes throughout the City.

However, given the UCRRA increase in refuse, recycling and sludge disposal tipping fees, we must be prepared to deal with the impact on our City Budgets. The increase in tipping fees by the UCRRA is not fair nor reasonable to the taxpayers. It shall have an adverse financial impact on prospective budgets.

Therefore, I have asked Superintendent Michael Schupp, Comptroller John Tuey, Corporation Counsel Andrew Zweben and WTPO Allen Winchell to prepare a report as to the City's options and alternatives for refuse and recycling being sent to the UCRRA.

Should we not consider the circumstances with the UCRRA, the investment into our City's refuse and recycling pickup by my administration and the initiative originally started by Mayor Sottile's administration may be an unacceptable use of taxpayer dollars!!

The department has also introduced computerized delivery systems for road salt during winter maintenance operations in its newer trucks and also introduced pre-treatment of brine for de-icing roads. These efforts have not only reduced the salt used during a snow or ice event but has helped to reduce overtime costs, and the amount of granular salt used for each storm and improving the environmental impacts of salt use. These newer trucks have wing plows that follow designated priority routes while plowing which improves bad weather travel for motorists and reduces trucks and personnel costs during a snow/ice event.

The environmental benefits to the changes in both winter road maintenance and refuse and recycling are just a few procedural changes introduced during the past several years in the DPW that will benefit future residents and generations for years to come.

These new efforts help to reduce the carbon footprint by reducing fuel consumption and exhaust emissions because of fewer trucks required for the operations stated.

The Single Stream recycling effort was completed on target in 2013 and we are now beginning the roll out of refuse totes. Our hope is to complete this effort by 2016.

We are merely just beginning to realize the positive impact that these cost saving measures are having on the City's sanitation budget. But we are confident that changes such as these will continue to bring Kingston into the future and provide

its residents with services that are efficient and cost effective, environmentally friendly and continue to make Kingston a safe and pleasant community to reside in.

In 2014, the City received \$593,457.56 in NYS CHIPS paving funds and \$57,510.29 for pothole repairs. The Superintendent has completed a list of streets for this year's paving. After consultation with all utility providers operating in the City, a final list will be made available to the public. Actually, over 5000 tons of material was applied to our City streets.

In 2014, the Department of Public Works has used 241 tons of cold patch (temporary) blacktop, patching our City streets. Due to the brutally harsh winter in 2014, the department has been performing repairs and rebuilding storm water catch basins throughout the City.

The City's Capital Plan-Budget 2014 and 2015 shall include major repairs and improvements throughout our City's infrastructure and our public facilities totaling approximately \$25 million dollars.

The Capital Plan projects proposed for 2015 include: repairs and improvements to the Andy Murphy Midtown Neighborhood Center, \$700,000 plus \$100,000 CDBG funding; the repair and upgrades for the Sewage Treatment Plant to make our treatment plant more resilient, sustainable and capable of handling our City's discharge process capacity and three (3) municipal parking lots uptown and midtown.

In addition, the Capital Projects for Grand Street, Jacobs Valley (back to Mayor Sottile) and Washington Avenue Manhole Repairs and improvement are now in design state. These three (3) Capital infrastructure projects were categorized as emergencies permitting my administration to get started on each.

The authorization for funding for the design state for each project was obtained with the assistance of most of our City Council. The public should know the Council's Infrastructure sub-committee I recommended be established has made no review and/or recommendations regarding any infrastructure Capital Plan project. Indeed, an emergency had to be declared to move on the three (3)

Capital Plan Projects noted above. Therefore, I am respectfully requesting this committee assist my administration with review and determination of Capital Plan infrastructure projects that have been considered years ago (in Mayor Sottile's administration) and during my time in office. It is hoped the GAP assessment study of our City's infrastructure will further support my and prior administrations proposed Capital Plan projects. Nonetheless, thank you to all the City Council members supporting funding and authorization to begin such Capital Projects. We must work together on these and all Capital Projects to protect and advance quality of life and the health, safety and welfare of the public and to foster economic development.

Thank you to Ralph Swenson, City Engineer, for your hard work and professional advocacy regarding necessity repair of our crumbling infrastructure; both you and your assistant Alan Adin deserve our thanks!

When I was campaigning for the Office of Mayor in 2011, I would consistently see 8-10 individuals per day /night at corner of Broadway and Henry Street clocking or making drug sales. In addition, to the clockers—aka drug dealers—the usual prostitutes would be walking up and down Broadway advertising they were open for business. The landscape of Broadway was littered with vacant storefronts disillusioned small business entrepreneurs and residents living along the Broadway Corridor.

Today, under the leadership of Chief Tinti, the dedicated and hard work of our Police Department, there is no visible clocking or selling of drugs at the corner of Broadway and Henry Streets and the usual prostitutes are not so bold to advertise their business!! Sure, we still have drug dealing and prostitutes in our City and in midtown, however, the landscape of Broadway—Midtown is much different. There is renewed interest in investment in midtown—specifically on Broadway. A feeling of pride amongst many its residents and renewed sense of hope and opportunity for business and investors.

There are new businesses, restaurants and service providers in previously vacant storefronts. The Broadway Corridor has experienced a significant influx of

Latinos and other ethnic—racial groups who have opened new businesses and restaurants. There has been significant investment in number of commercial properties all because the landscape has changed in the last four years. I am proud of Chief Tinti and our police department personnel for serving and protecting the public. Thank you for your role in making this City a better and safe place to live, work and play!

But all in our City must acknowledge citizen participation and commitment to public safety for everyone must be the goal. This is imperative for our Police Department to protect and serve our City. That said, any resident, business, clergy professional who has any concern about the department be it criminal or quality of life, please contact my office. I will pass any information to our Chief and/or pertinent department head who will usually contact the party to address their concerns about the safety and welfare of our City.

Under the leadership of Chief Tinti, personnel, equipment and technology have been allocated and/or reallocated for foot patrol, bike patrol, Youth Bureau, special assignments, special investigations unit; community policing and major interdepartmental drug-gang related investigations. Once again, all of the aforesaid has been accomplished without spending any additional taxpayer dollars. The Chief of our Police Department has also continued to generate community spirit and morale among the personnel of the Police Department.

In an effort to further enhance our public safety, the Chief has also implemented: supervisors out on the streets, Broadway Corridor patrol zone; expanded use of social media, enhanced presence in our schools (SRO'S) added Youth Bureau at the Hodge Center. All of these initiatives implemented by Chief Tinti.

To assure our residents, members of the clergy and faith-based groups throughout our City, businesses and professionals have access to our Police Department, we are considering a community liaison to connect with the Police Commission so as to further facilitate community policing. I think we all agree, community policing makes Kingston a better place to be. We all want Kingston safer for everyone and we can only do this together. In December of 2014 we

held a community forum at New Progressive Church sponsored in conjunction with the Black Minister Alliance of our City.

From our community forum in December 2014 the following will be considered by our Police Commission: sensitivity training, body cameras, community liaison and recruitment of all people of color for our Police Department. The aforesaid requests from the public are being addressed by my administration in conjunction with our Police Commission, Clergy and residents of our City.

So what do we see in our community mirror? Whatever we see is the result of a partnership working together to make our City a “Model City”.

We should all be proud of what we see in our mirror about our City. Why?

Our City is distinguishable from other upstate, Hudson River Valley municipalities. Our City is posed to be a “Model City” so let’s look into our mirror:

- New paradigm for governing our City providing a transparent, accessible, fair, open, cost effective, connective and inclusive government;
- Our City’s historical heritage
- Architectural historical history-streetscape;
- Ethnic and racial diversity thriving since Dutch settled in 1652;
- Lunch bucket charm-we help build the Empire State!
- Natural/physical beauty of our City;
- Plethora of (K365) cultural, arts, entertainment and recreational activities on land and water;
- Uptown, Stockade (past and present);
- Broadway Corridor (Bring Back Broadway) Connectivity, Greenline, BEAT (a business, education, art and technology) district;
- Rondout Waterfront, connectivity, Greenline, cultural arts, restaurant, recreational, commercial, deep water port harbor;

UPTOWN STOCKADE DISTRICT

- The past-historical cultural venue;
- Present—what’s changed in four (4) years?

- KUBA-Pike Commission;
- Pike Canopy-Bumpouts;
- RFQ's Parking Garage, North Front Street lots;
- Parking;
- Events, cultural venue;
- Expanding restaurant district with more occupied commercial property over last four (4) years;
- BSP Entertainment;
- Niche Tech Firms;
- Farmer's Market;
- Catskill Mountain Railroad;
- Rail Trail-Washington Avenue;
- Rail Trail South Wall Street;

BROADWAY CORRIDOR

- Past-What's changed in four (4) years?
- Present-Bring Back Broadway;
- BEAT;
- Connectivity;
- Greenline-Rail Trail;
- Art District Council, Artbridge;
- Midtown Business Association;
- Commercial Investment almost \$2 million dollars in last year!
- Lace Mill, Cornell Street;
- UPAC;
- Invest in human capital, educational corridor to connect (art, technology, health care);
- SUNY-UCCC;
- High School renovation project;
- Health Alliance;
- Expanding ethnic commercial;
- RFQ Kings Inn, uses currently

RONDOUT WATERFRONT DISTRICT

- Past-the immigrant Gateway to our City;
- Transformation from cement, brickyards, ice house, slaughterhouse, D&H Canal, ship building, railroad to an expanding cultural, arts, antique, retail, restaurant, recreation and boating district;
- New Irish Cultural Center;
- Trolley line;
- Rail Trail;
- Rondout Waterfront Business Association;
- Events;
- Promenade; Bulkhead Commercial Development;
- Funding for major waterfront studies, continuing Mayor Quick, Mayor Gallo (waterfront revitalization plan), Mayor Sottile's effort to revitalize Rondout from the legacy of Urban Renewal (i.e., GIS, Brownfield, Sea Level Task Force, Kingston Waterfront Resiliency Plan);
- AVR-Promenade;
- Sailor's Cove

2015 INITIATIVES

- Office of Economic Development
- Expanding arts, digital, film production; Intermunicipal Film Commission;
- Townsquare;
- Industrial park; KLDC;
- CDBG Programs; First-time home buyer-Rehab-RUPCO, Social skills, educational/internship workforce;
- Community Choice Aggregation;
- Land Bank;
- Urban agriculture initiatives (value added produce);
- FiOS/Broadband; municipal internet;

- RFQ's for parking garage, North Front Street Parking Lot, Kings Inn, Rondout;
- Homestead/Non-Homestead;
- Infrastructure;
- Greater Kingston Labor Council

So after we look in the mirror and see its reflection. Are we better off than four (4) years ago? Yes, because of our partnership. A partnership with an inclusive vision of what our City is and can be prospectively.

Why has the partnership been so successful? We are listening to each other, including each other in a collective conversation which translates into positive change for our City.

As I stated, look at what we have accomplished. However, the naysayers and cynics will probably still contend nothing good is happening in our City; that there has been no meaningful, positive, productive change in our City.

To those folks, I say “please become a stakeholder in our partnership—there is a place for all in it!”

In addition, in response to the naysayers/cynics contending our government is divided, said individuals must be looking at a different community mirror and/or live in another city.

If our government was as divided as the naysayers say, why has the Executive Branch worked so well with most of our Legislative Branch of City government? The public is aware usually seven (7) of nine (9) council persons vote on behalf of their—the public interest; not for political elites and crony friends wanting to do business with our City government but without being subject to the State and Local Law requirements for procurement of goods, equipment and services.

To those seven (7) of the City Council, thank you for acting on behalf of the public interest. You all deserve recognition for acting in a manner that puts petty politics aside and vote for the public interests, not personal!

Our partnership has resulted in substantial media coverage in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Forbes Magazine and other national media outlets reporting on our City moving forward to become a “Model City”. Also, positive reporting by such media outlets generates interest in our City to live, work, play and invest!

Our partnership has given our City hope and a promise of opportunities for all stakeholders. We are at a very important historical crossroad so to the naysayers—be a stakeholder, not an advocate for negative adversarial action which is not in the public’s interest!

Simply put, please let’s work together because History Is Just Our Beginning! We can be that “Model City”!

Thank you to Governor Cuomo, our City Council, County Executive Michael Hein, Congressman Chris Gibson, City representatives of County Legislature, Superintendent Paul Padalino (KSD) and Charles Khoury (BOCES), President Don Katt (UCCC) and David Scarpino (Health Alliance) for your support and partnership.