

Good evening. Welcome to the 2018 Saratoga Springs State of the City Address. As your mayor, it is my honor to give this annual address along with my fellow City Council members.

I would like to recognize several current and former elected officials who are with us this evening.

- Congressman Paul Tonko
- Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner
- Jeff Quain From the Governor's office
- Former Mayor Ken Klotz
- Commander Christopher Tejada

Also thank you Ryan McMahon & the City Center for hosting us, and thank you to the City's IT department for making our slide presentation possible.

With new administrations, come opportunities for new ideas and traditions. Tonight you will be hearing from each Commissioner for an update to the public on their departments. In the commission form of government, we all see the absolute need to work together. We must *listen* intently and *understand* each department's needs and goals. One example of a new idea is that our deputies are now meeting twice each month, and we believe this will improve communications amongst our departments and help identify new ways to work more effectively. During these past few months I have met with each of the commissioners, and we are working and making plans together for the future.

In my first month, I have met with community partners from Saratoga Hospital, NYRA, Global Foundries, Downtown Business Association, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce, Saratoga Performing Arts Center, NY State Parks, Saratoga City Center, Saratoga Arts, Saratoga Housing Authority, the School District, the Veterans & Community Housing Coalition, Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul, the YMCA and many business and homeowners in the community. Creating relationships is critical to finding out the community's needs that are vital to our residents, visitors and economic vitality.

It's often said that Saratoga Springs is THE place to live, work and visit in NY and the Northeast, and among the best in the country. I believe that the City Council and all City employees share this sentiment. So as you hear from us tonight about our City, we hope you feel our enthusiasm. And as your public servants, we look forward to improving the efficiency and increasing the quality of providing city services to **all** residents...doing our part to keep Saratoga Springs THE #1 PLACE TO BE YEAR-ROUND!!

Now, I am pleased to begin with highlights from the Mayor's departments.

Recreation Department

In 2017, the Rec Commission's Playground Initiative made significant improvements to the West Side Recreation Park and East Side Recreation Park, investing over \$260,000 in new playground equipment. The department also developed three new programs:

- Youth Boxing in partnership with Saratoga Youth Boxing
- Field Hockey League
- Tiny Basketball program

Other highlights of 2017 include the following:

- Camp Saradac camp registrations have increased nearly 50% since 2016.
- The Rec Commission selected and hired a consultant to develop a Recreation Master Plan.
- The Saratoga Springs Friends of Recreation, a non-profit organization run by a group of volunteer residents, was restarted and helped to fund a few key projects.

In 2018, the Commission, with support from the Friends of Recreation, will be seeking funding to renovate the Veteran's Memorial Park playground as part of the next phase of the Playground Initiative. The primary focus of the Recreation Commission in 2018 will be to complete the City's Recreation Master Plan.

Planning and Economic Development

Saratoga Springs continues to experience robust growth. Our staff in the Planning Department manages various capital and infrastructure projects within the city, as well as provides technical assistance during the design review process to applicants and the City's Land Use Boards. Last year's highlights include:

- The final sidewalk section of "Safe Routes to School" was completed on Geysers Road, which will connect to the Geysers Road Trail.
- Bikeshare was successfully launched, with hundreds of riders in Saratoga Springs, and will expand its hubs in 2018.
- Additional trail connections to the very popular Spring Run Trail have been completed with private development on the corridor.
- The City has been awarded \$2.7M in grant funds for projects like the Greenbelt Downtown Connector project, Electric Vehicle (EV) stations and a Natural Resource Inventory.
- Land use board applications are now submitted electronically on the City's website.

- Notable re-investment in our downtown include:
 - Caffè Lena, where a private/non-profit partnership allowed for a modernized space;
 - Multi-million dollar renovation of the Adelphi Hotel – the last grand Victorian hotel in Saratoga Springs.

The City's Community Development program administered over \$500K in HUD Grant Funding, Residential Rehabilitation Loans and Economic Development Loans, which brought assistance to more than 1,000 people in our community, in the form of housing, job creation and public services.

New and continuing projects and expansions for 2018 will include:

- Notable developments on Washington Street, including Universal Preservation Hall, Rip Van Dam, Adelphi Partners Hotel-Spa and the Bethesda Church expansion, and on Church Street – Hidden Fountain Commons, enhancements to existing structures and new development and upgrades to infrastructure.
- Outside of the downtown center, Excelsior Avenue continues to be actively developed: hundreds of residential units and commercial space; and the downtown connector will provide important upgrades for bike, pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Expansion within Grande Industrial Park and other properties zoned for industrial development continues, including Greenfield Manufacturing and SKS Bottling Facility.
- Development that promises to expand our urban core, like the Intrada project on West Avenue and the Link @SoBro, will also offer much needed Workforce Housing units to the strategic locations in the City.

Building Department

The Building Department is responsible for reviewing and issuing permits, performing inspections and enforcing compliance with New York State Building Codes and local zoning regulations. In addition, the Building Department provides assistance to the city's Zoning Board of Appeals and Design Review Commission as necessary.

We've seen a steady increase in requests for building permits in recent years, and we issued a record 855 permits in 2017. This represents more than 2.5X the number of permits we issued in 2011. Revenues have increased as well, and last year we generated over \$390,000 in permit fees and fines. Naturally inspections have also increased: our inspectors performed 1,996 inspections last year, which is about 8 inspections per day.

During the last quarter of 2017, we established a new program allowing developers of large and more complex construction projects the option to have their applications reviewed by a City Designated Engineer. This has improved our capacity for reviewing smaller residential projects.

Enforcement matters have steadily increased, representing an increased workload on inspectors and the city attorney's office to bring properties and projects into compliance with city code and zoning regulations. The Enforcement team, a multi-department group, meets regularly to move these violations towards compliance.

The "season" for construction continues to lengthen, and therefore it is critical to examine our practices for creative ways to improve our efficiency, provide consistent service and generally be more responsive to higher volumes of applications. This is our focus for 2018 in the Building Department.

Office of the City Attorney

The City Attorney's Office provides legal advice and guidance to the City including drafting Resolutions, Local Laws, changes to our City Code, Real Estate matters and contracts with vendors.

In 2017, in conjunction with the efforts of our Code Enforcement Officers and both the Building Department and the Department of Public Safety, the City Attorney's saw an increase in the prosecution of Building, Zoning and City Code violations as part of the efforts to achieve more consistent enforcement and greater compliance with our laws.

The City Attorney's Office also helped facilitate contract negotiations between the City and the 5 labor unions whose contracts were expired or expiring in 2017. Once again, utilizing our City Attorneys and handling labor negotiations "in-house," resulted in additional savings to the City in legal fees and expenses on these matters which would have traditionally been handled by outside legal counsel.

The City Attorney's Office administers the FOIL requests submitted to the City. In 2017, they received and processed 247 FOIL requests. This resulted in the production of thousands of pages of documents all helping to ensure that we continue to operate in a manner that is as transparent and open as possible.

Human Resources

The City hired a Human Resources Administrator in the fall of 2017, and the relationship with HR in all departments has already been strengthened. Accomplishments in 2017 include:

- Implementing a new-hire orientation program
- Assisting the Finance Department in holding the annual Health and Wellness Fair and in selecting a new Dental Benefit Program for employees.
- Establishing procedures for handling employee discipline and safety matters
- Revised and published the City's Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual

Upcoming goals and objectives include:

- Providing on-site training for City departments
- Provide a Lunch and Learn Series
- Providing a Health and Wellness series
- Increase HR's effectiveness in delivering services through technology

Office of the City Historian

The Office of the City Historian serves as a community resource to other entities and institutions, the media, researchers and students. The topics are varied, and the requests come from all over the city, county, state and country. For example, we contributed to the Downtown Historical displays which are part of City's "Wayfinding" project, spearheaded by the Saratoga Springs Special Assessment District. The work of the City Historian is to preserve, protect, promote and present the history and heritage of our community.

Looking Forward

The Mayor's department is focused on many exciting initiatives this year, and I would like to acknowledge my fellow Council members, whose departments are key to the success of these efforts. Let me give you an example. For the "mayor's" projects, my staff relies on help with RFPs and contracts from the Accounts Department, assistance with budget appropriations and allocations from the Finance Department, and support of engineering, implementation and ongoing maintenance from Public Works and Public Safety. We are interdependent and serve all residents together. **Collaboration** amongst our departments is critical. And opportunities to work more **efficiently** are important to all of us.

We are blessed to have many volunteers in our community who give their time on various boards, commissions and committees to advise and assist us. We sincerely thank you!

We look forward to the completion of the uniform development ordinance or UDO, which will lead to improved code and zoning compliance and also encourage inner city infill that is critical to sustained economic development.

The City is **partnering** with community leaders to solve our downtown parking problems, to continue the Greenbelt Trail expansion and to make Saratoga Springs a *cultural* destination.

Saratoga Springs is home to many museums, theaters and venues like Saratoga Performing Arts Center, the Universal Preservation Hall, Caffe Lena, Skidmore College, the Saratoga Arts Fest, the Beekman Street Arts District and an exciting effort of the NYS Parks called “Park of the Arts”. So now we can tell the world, Saratoga Springs is known for Health, History, Horses **and** the ARTS!

ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT, JOHN FRANCK

Good evening fellow Saratogians. I have had the privilege of serving as your Commissioner of Accounts since 2006. During that time, our government has experienced many challenges from the community and the economy. Deputy Commissioner Maire Masterson and I take pride in our commitment to the community and the work we do for you every day. I am pleased to present some of the global initiatives my department will be working on in 2018 in cooperation with other federal and state agencies, and departments within City Hall:

CDTA: Taxi Consortium Legislation:

- The Accounts Department is working with Assemblyman John McDonald and the CDTA to implement uniform taxi legislation throughout the Capital District Area to provide better transportation opportunities to and from the major transportation hubs in the area.
- The legislation allows a simplification of the taxi transportation visitors to our City and utilizes and standardizes rates and services. It is anticipated that the legislation will allow for universal taxi medallion standards and increase taxi driver accountability to their passenger population as the project nears completion in 2019.
- Web based payment applications shared by Capital District communities will lead to future ride sharing opportunities for our City.

Federal Highway Authority NYS Department of Transportation Division: ADA:

- The Office of Risk and Safety is working closely with the FHA Department of Transportation, the City Attorney, Department of Public Works, and the Planning Department to continue its work with ADA programming for our community.
- Accessibility is a priority for both our residents and visitors to our area. Short and long term planning that coordinates with our Complete Streets philosophy will enable our government to better meet the needs of our aging workforce and community.
- The City Council formally adopted the ADA Program in the fall of 2017. Plans are currently underway to catalogue streets and sidewalks within our community that will ask us all to participate and get all of us involved in making our City safe and better connected.
- The ADA Work Group has retained the services of an Intern from Skidmore College working under the supervision of Risk and Safety who is assisting the City in Stage Two of this effort.

Safety Committee Emergency Management Planning:

- The City Safety Committee hosted the Saratoga County Local Emergency Planning Committee's Table Top exercise on December 6th. Members of federal, state, county and Safety Committee members participated in a drill that gauged the resources available to our community in the event of an emergency situation.
- The Safety Committee will continue its work with emergency planning to better prepare our citizens and visitors in what services can and should be expected in a time of emergency weather or other situations that arise.
- FEMA and Homeland Security Training will be offered to employees in the community in the coming year to continue our City's safety efforts.

Special Event Programming:

The Accounts Department, Risk and Safety and the City Safety Committee are working on revamping the City's Special Events in cooperation with the local Saratoga Chamber of Commerce. The application process has been revamped and procedures streamlined to better serve the community as a whole. We are meeting with local community leaders to better plan for the wonderful events that will be held throughout the year encouraging our tourism and place a gem in the historic racing community.

Vendor Programming:

- Risk and Safety is working with the City Attorney, Departments of Public Safety and Public Works, and Accounts Department to review and update the City's Vending Ordinance to meet the changing needs of our community.
- Meetings will be held with the community to determine best practice strategies to address vending concerns at the Saratoga Race Track and various business districts throughout the City. It is anticipated that the new Vendor Ordinance will be ready for the upcoming summer season.
- The Vendor working group is drafting legislation to allow for an entrepreneurial program for the community's children selling water at the Track.

Assessment:

- The Assessment Office continues to see stabilization in the number of Grievances being filed. In previous years we have had well over 100. In 2015 it dropped to 79, in 2016 to 71 and 2017 we had 75.
- In 2017 we also continued to have the lowest Senior Citizen Exemption Denial rate. This is the continued result of contact with each Senior via phone calls to remind them of the date and have open communication.
- The Office continues to offer a yearly Grievance Class to help educate and inform property owners including explanation of assessment. In many instances owners find they are properly assessed and therefore do not need to file.
- The City of Saratoga Springs also just approved to amend by local law Article 10, Chapter 212 of the City Code relative to the Alternative Veterans' Exemption: Cold War Veterans Exemption to remove the 10 year time limit set forth in the New York State Real Property Tax Law, Section 458-b making this exemption permanent.
- The Saratoga Springs School District Board of Education voted to adopt a resolution for the Alternate Veterans Tax Exemption for School Taxes for the 2018-19 school taxes. It is the responsibility of the Assessment Office to apply these exemptions to each and every parcel. We have been working tirelessly with extended work hours to get these exemptions and all required documentation needed to fulfill the March 1st deadline.
- I would like to take this opportunity to state that I will not be reassessing the City in 2018. Our annual level of assessment is in compliance with NYS guidelines and the cost far outweighs the benefits.

Records Retention:

- As the City's Records Management Officer, my priority has always been to increase the efficiency of information retrieval and access in order to respond accurately and quickly to customer's inquiries.
- My office continues to make strides in that direction. We are now scanning land use boards' records of decision, notices of decision, advisory and administrative opinions.
- We are working with the City's IT department to establish a public portal of Laserfiche. It will enable the public to access City Council minutes in a text searchable format.
- This year we received permission from the NYS Archives to utilize grant monies to renovate a downstairs room of the Finance Department into a secure storage area for the City's documents. Improvements include HVAC, lighting and additional shelving that will increase storage capacity by 68%.

In conclusion, the Accounts Department Team is composed of a special group of professionals who manage a variety of tasks. It is important that my charge to them is leadership, based upon transparency. We are driven by the needs of the community, and together we are committed to excellent service.

I try to make every dollar count that is important to you as a family and as a taxpayer. My Accounts Team makes every dollar you earn and pay as taxes a working "number" for you. Streamlining government to make it as efficient as possible helps us all as government mandates increase and our collective dollars continue to shrink. I'm always open to your suggestions and your concerns. You're important to each of us as elected officials because we try our very best given the resources we have to serve you and your family's needs each and every day.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, COMMISSIONER MADIGAN

(1) Thank you Mayor for giving City Council members the opportunity to participate in this year's State of the City Address. 2017 was a very productive year for the Finance Department, and we have entered 2018 with several goals and projects, all of which will contribute to the success of the City and our residents.

(2) The 2018 General Fund Operating Budget increased 1.3% to account for additional services to residents and rising personnel costs, while the tax rate has again remained stable. There have been virtually no increases in the tax rate for six straight years, which coincides with my time as Commissioner of Finance. This is in line with the "exceptional and affordable" budgetary mantra I mentioned during the 2018 Budget presentation, whereby the City has and will continue to offer stellar services to our residents and businesses, all at a cost that they can bear. In 2017 the City retained its strong bond rating, received another positive audit report, and continued to maintain healthy fund balance and reserves, all of which positions the City well to handle any future projects and unforeseen expenses. The state of our city finances is **STRONG!**

As Finance Commissioner I oversee the City's IT Department, whose team continues to make improvements that positively impact City processes, such as streamlining how departments interact with residents, increasing user functionality on the City website, and adding resources to help City employees get things done. These improvements don't just make your visits to City Hall easier, they also contribute to the City's bottom line.

As I discussed during the 2018 Budget presentation in October, Finance is currently focusing on three budget and IT-related projects: healthcare expenses, short-term rentals, and parking.

- Healthcare is one of the City's largest expenses; this year I will do everything I can to keep this burden manageable, including reviewing the healthcare options available to City employees and pursuing possible IT solutions;
- Saratoga Springs has a long history of rentals, particularly during the summer season as visitors flock to the area for various events, but as rental trends and technologies have changed the City Council has become aware of several rental-related problems now facing the area. Safety and quality-of-life issues are among the paramount concerns of all City Council members. That said, I would note that there are notable financial concerns with short-term rentals as well, such as fiscal fairness. City hotels and other lodgings go through a lengthy review process, are regularly inspected, and pay their fair share of occupancy tax.

In 2018 we as a Council will look to ensure short-term rental units meet a similar threshold, so that the City can provide visitors of Saratoga Springs with a safe, enjoyable experience, while also maintaining a level playing-field among providers of lodging options;

- Finally, parking has been alluded to by City Council members for some time, and while we have yet to finalize our plans, I am happy to report that there are ongoing discussions across City Hall to come up with a solution that modernizes the City's parking with a tech-driven management system, which will result in an improved parking experience for City residents and guests. I would hope that any system provide preferential parking allowances for City residents and employees.

(3) Before I get to those Finance Department 2017 accomplishments and future goals that are more public facing, I'd like to highlight a recent IT improvement within City Hall which illustrates how we are utilizing technology effectively. In 2017 the Department of Public Works and the Police Department went live with NOVATIME, an updated time and attendance system that allows the use of biometric fingerprint terminals like the one you see on screen. NOVATIME seamlessly integrates with the City's payroll system and allows users to more effectively manage their schedule. This results in improved efficiencies, accountability, and provides for a better personnel audit trail. We are very pleased with the progress we have made to date, and look forward to the continued roll out of NOVATIME in 2018.

(4) One area I have focused a lot of my time on is Energy, both for the City's budget and on behalf of residents. On August 22nd all 7,992 solar panels installed at the Spa Solar Park were energized, and in roughly four months the facility generated nearly 917,000 kWh of electricity, saving the City thousands of dollars in utility expenses.

On September 5th the City Council unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the exploration of a Community Choice Aggregation (or "CCA") Program. CCAs, which are recommended by New York State and National Grid, aim to provide improved energy sourcing for residents, including better pricing and the ability to decide their overall energy mix. Our partner MEGA is currently working with nearby municipalities to join us, and we hope to begin formally educating City residents directly about the benefits of CCAs in the near future.

Another energy-related initiative I have been working on is Energize NY PACE Finance. This program is funded by State and Federal funds, and underwrites, finances, and oversees clean energy upgrades to commercial and not-for-profit buildings. A representative from Energize NY will be presenting at the February 6th City Council meeting and I invite anyone interested in learning more about the program to attend.

Lastly, Community Solar was previously identified as being Phase II of the City's Solar program. With the Spa Solar Park now up and running smoothly, I have started looking into community solar public/private partnership options, and I hope to update you all on my progress in the near future.

(5) In February 2016 I created the Smart City Commission to help set Saratoga Springs on a path to becoming a smarter, more tech-driven city, and in October 2016 I presented our initial vision, dubbed Smart City Roadmap 1.0. Since that time we have made progress on many of the 1.0 initiatives, so much so that a 2.0 version is in the works. One project I'm happy to update everyone on today is public Wi-Fi in Congress Park, which is now operational through the network "Saratoga Free Public." The City is also applying what we learn through the Smart City process to ensure we use the best, most secure technology we can.

One potential project that wasn't in the 1.0 Roadmap but that would materially alter the City's technological capabilities would be gigabyte fiber access to every home and business in the City. We are currently in the midst of the RFP process; should things work out as anticipated, there would be increased broadband competition City-wide, which would provide internet access at a speed exponentially better than what's currently available, at a more affordable price. This would improve residents' online experience, allow existing businesses to use technology previously thought unavailable, and would be a huge economic driver, as new businesses would be enticed to relocate to Saratoga Springs.

(6) Speaking of Economic Development, I'd like to congratulate the City Center on a fantastic 2017, including the increase in both number of events held and days in use. The City Center is one of the pillars of the City's economy, and I look forward to working together and continuing our strong relationship, as success for the City Center translates to success for the whole City.

The City will also continue to work on public-private partnerships, whereby the City can partner with an expert in a given field, to the benefit of everyone involved, including Saratoga Springs residents. Two recent examples of this are the South Broadway project known as the Link@SoBro, and the renovation of Universal Preservation Hall. These two projects will address needs previously identified, specifically housing and off-peak season attractions, both of which will drive millions of dollars into the City's economy.

Finally, I'd be remiss not to discuss the impact of the City's arts and culture community on our financial ecosystem. I'm happy to say that City Council members have recently had productive meetings with Saratoga Performing Arts Center leadership, and the City will continue to assist SPAC as they become a more year-round attraction. Like the City Center, SPAC is a pillar of the Saratoga Springs economy, and I personally look forward to strengthening our bond and leveraging the appreciation for the arts that exists throughout the City. This pre-existing appreciation will drive one of my major goals for this term, which is to foster the City's creative economy. I believe promoting this creative economy will allow new businesses to grow, providing jobs and opportunity for City residents, while also driving guests to the City to experience our world-class facilities and experiences.

Thank you all for your time, and I look forward to a happy, healthy, and successful 2018.

PUBLIC WORKS, SKIP SCIROCCO

The Department of Public Works is in a strong position to provide the services and resources required by residents, businesses, and our fellow city departments as we begin 2018. DPW is responsible for the maintenance of 146 miles of city streets, over 250 miles of water, sanitary and storm lines, 43 city owned buildings, 4 recreational fields and spray parks, 3 public parks, 2 water treatment facilities, 2 trails, and one household hazardous waste day. DPW provides these, and many additional services, twenty-four seven, 365 days a year.

A textbook example of the services provided by the department occurred on the day before Thanksgiving. It was discovered that a 20-inch main coming from the water treatment plant, dating back to 1896, sprung a leak.

The DPW workforce was quickly dispatched in an effort to repair the leak; our employees jettisoned their personal plans and worked late into the day to repair the leak so that the City had water on this all-important family holiday.

Furthermore the utilities department, engineering, and the water treatment plant employees worked together to replace that section of pipe over the course of the following weeks. A new shut-off valve and fire hydrant were installed so that if such a problem ever occurs again, that area of water infrastructure can be isolated and managed.

I also want to recognize the City of Troy; they provided an emergency repair flange and 20-inch valve to speed up the process of making the repair.

That's your DPW at work.

DPW has excelled in historic preservation. The principal capital investment for our historic buildings has been in the Canfield Casino. The Casino is on the National Register of Historic Places and is a U.S. Historic Landmark. I've been blessed with stewardship over this building, and with the support of the council we have safeguarded this building for future generation's enjoyment.

In 2017 we worked on restoring the ballroom. Hundreds of cherubs and decorative leafing were restored, and the ceiling repainted. In Addition, the stained-glass lay lights were cleaned and LED backlighting was added so that even at night, the glass can be lit. I'm proud to say this has earned the project of the year award in the Historic Preservation category from the New York Chapter of the American Public Works Association. Special thanks to everyone who worked on this project, especially Assistant City Engineer Deb LaBreche.

Heading into 2018 we have two great projects planned, the restoration of the Katrina Trask Gateway in Congress Park and the rejuvenation of Deer Spring.

For Katrina Trask we plan to restore the Iron Gate, replace stairs and landings, install more lighting, and clear the east and west hills in the park of overgrowth.

For the Deer Spring, the plan is to fix plumbing and draining issues and restore the fountain façade to its original beauty. Work has already begun on both to keep things on schedule.

Our historic resources, especially those in Congress Park, are a treasure for our residents and visitors. Our responsibility to the public is to preserve and protect these resources today and in the future.

Each year DPW implements a paving program for the repair and maintenance of city streets. In 2017 we paved twenty-two streets or street sections including the major intersection at Broadway, Lake Avenue, and Church Street. DPW utilized \$744,750 in CHIPs funding to complete this work.

Looking forward to 2018, DPW purchased a new Hamm HD Roller with CHIPs funding. This investment will increase the number of paving jobs scheduled by DPW, eliminating the need to rent a roller from private companies.

I look forward to working with my Deputy Joe O'Neill on the 2018 paving program. In our planning, we will work on ways to include complete streets concepts along with ADA accessibility, walking, biking, and driving mobility improvements.

An accomplishment that the City can be proud of is our designation from the Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree City USA. In collaboration with Tom Denny and Sustainable Saratoga, DPW applied to become a tree city in 2017 and was given the designation last year. We're planning a celebration this spring.

The master forestry plan provides a great framework for our urban forest. It includes a full-time city arborist, which I created in my department and is a requirement of Tree City designation. This position has demonstrated our commitment to the urban forest, and we will continue to ensure that Saratoga Springs is a Tree City USA in the future.

DPW is committed to utilizing 21st century technology in our operation. This year, two important advances are being made with Network Fleet Manager, and a Digital Work Order system.

After researching many options, DPW selected Network Fleet Manager system provided by Verizon. With this new technology, we will be able to digitally monitor the DPW fleet, identify diagnostic trouble codes, receive vehicle maintenance notifications, and locate vehicles to ensure services are being provided. A digital footprint will assist us in snowstorms to ensure each street has been plowed, and during emergencies to quickly dispatch the workforce. There are important safety features that provide notifications in case a vehicle has been in an accident. I want to recognize the DPW Business Manager Mike Veitch for implementing this solution into our workforce.

Another important development is a Digital Work Order System. DPW has been working with the Finance Department on a system to provide services to the public, track work orders, and ensure work is completed in a timely fashion. We are close to a final product, and I want to thank IT Systems Manager Kevin Kling, Deputy Finance Commissioner Mike Sharp, and Mike Veitch for their work on this solution.

Heading into 2018 DPW will continue to focus on infrastructure and teamwork, and will add new technology to our operation. I'm confident that by year's end you will see a more collaborative and effective Department of Public Works, thank you.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, COMMISSIONER MARTIN

Thank you Mayor Kelly, and thanks to all of my fellow commissioners.

The Department of Public Safety provides world class police, fire, code enforcement, and traffic maintenance & enforcement services to the people of the City of Saratoga Springs. The Department of Public Safety employs 157 full-time and 34 part-time employees. Saratoga Springs is the fifth largest city, by area, in the State of New York. Although the physical size of the city does not grow in the summer, our population effectively more than doubles, creating significant demands on those who provide essential public services.

This is no easy task. I would like to thank Police Chief Greg Veitch, Fire Chief Bob Williams, and their Assistant Chiefs Catone and Shaw, Code Administrator Jack Donnelly, Traffic Administrator Mark Benacquista, Danielle Willard, Deputy Commissioner John Daley and all the members of our department for everything they do day in and day out on behalf of the city.

Police

In 2017 the City of Saratoga Springs continued to see low levels of property and violent crime. One focus of our department continues to be the opioid epidemic that is plaguing our state and nation. Another focus has been planning for safety during high volume tourist events throughout the year.

Saratoga Springs became the first city in New York State, outside New York City, to equip all of its police officers with body cameras. Our state of the art program has been a resounding success. Since its implementation, complaints brought against police personnel concerning use of force have almost disappeared. This past year, the department further improved the body camera program with an agreement for full replacement every two years, unlimited storage space, digital sharing and a new Prosecutor Portal, which will be on line this month. This new software saves significant manpower and hours.

We've also made serious upgrades to our dispatch capabilities. We are in the final stages of a significant remodel of the old and antiquated dispatch area and radio equipment. This remodel will bring our dispatch services into the 21st century. The radio and 911 equipment will provide state of the art communication equipment and combined with the radio tower project will tie Saratoga Springs directly to the core of the County Radio System. This project represents just one piece of the shared municipal services that our city needs for efficiency.

Saratoga County, along with Albany and Rensselaer Counties, are building a state of the art Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Mobile 911 system, referred to as TriTech. It will connect over 100 Police, Fire and EMS agencies across these three Counties. The TriTech system allows for real-time information sharing. We expect that the enhanced radio, 911 and Computer Aided Dispatch systems will be fully functioning by May 1.

The dispatch and 911 systems serve both our Police and Fire/EMS departments.

Fire & EMS

The Saratoga Springs Fire Department employs 62 firefighters, of whom 49 are paramedics. The department responded to 87 fires and a total of 5,164 fire and EMS calls overall in 2017.

The city provides its own ambulance services, supplemented by an outside contract with Empire Ambulance. In 2017, 3,731 EMS calls were answered in the City of Saratoga Springs, the majority of which were handled by our fire department. This is a significant – and growing – driver of department revenue. In 2017, EMS services brought in over \$1,000,000 in revenue.

Response times have remained steady over the past five years. Please note, however, that response times to district 3 – the Eastern portion of our city – are consistently higher than those to districts 1 and 2. This demonstrates the critical need for a third fire house to service those living on the eastern plateau and near Saratoga Lake.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement undertook a number of major initiatives last year. The Department of Public Safety obtained a \$150,000 grant to combat the problem of vacant and abandoned properties. The city hired a third code professional, tasked with tracking vacant structures, and requiring owners to register these structures for the purpose of identifying those that must be renovated or demolished and assigning responsibility for the upkeep of all.

This year, we will hire a part-time special prosecutor, specifically dedicated to combating the problems created by vacant structures and other housing-related code violations. This will generate some revenues and significant cost savings to the city by reducing the need for outside counsel.

Finally, through another grant opportunity, the Department of Public Safety was granted a two-year license for a computer program that easily tracks and displays city data including vacant properties, tax delinquencies, and utility bills.

Traffic Maintenance & Enforcement

Our Traffic Maintenance and Enforcement Department faces the challenge of handling and preparing for heavy traffic inflows, both today and in the future, in a destination city whose downtown streets were laid out in the early 18th century. Transportation is more than just getting cars and trucks from one place to another. It is about moving people and goods of all kinds efficiently and safely. We will take a comprehensive approach to our streets and sidewalks.

Last year we added bike lanes and crosswalks to our city's inventory. We are continuing to seek new grant funding to improve our pedestrian safety and alternative transportation infrastructure.

Department Initiatives

Our Department has a number of major initiatives under way.

A key component of a 21st century traffic and transportation plan is a complete streets initiative. Our goal is simple: to create a better experience for all types of transportation and travelers. We look forward to working cooperatively with the City Council to adopt and implement a revised Complete Streets Policy. This policy will be instrumental in dealing with traffic and parking challenges today and in the future.

Interagency cooperation is essential to providing affordable government for our citizens. We will continue to look for new shared service programs with Saratoga County, like the Computer Aided Dispatch program and the Prosecutor Portal. A few years ago we began coordinating safety and traffic preparations for Travers weekend with Federal, State and County agencies, including the FBI, State Police and County Sheriff. This year, for the first time, we are using this model for preparations for Chowderfest. I hope to expand these cooperative programs to both save our city taxpayers money and provide a safer environment for all residents and visitors.

During the past year, we made great progress in addressing the problems created by vacant and abandoned structures, but there is much more to do. We want to ensure problem properties are moving through the legal process in an efficient and cost effective manner. To that end, we are working across multiple departments, and soon with our new special prosecutor, we hope to streamline the legal process for code cases. This will save taxpayer dollars and reduce the number of eyesores and unsafe properties in our city. We also hope to address the public safety concerns generated by those who abuse short term rental arrangements. While respecting the history of Saratoga's Track Season, we hope to place the new arrangements on an even footing, in terms of safety, neighborhood respect and economic fairness, with other short term accommodations.

I remain committed to the construction of a third fire station to serve our eastern plateau. We owe it to our residents to ensure efficient response times to emergencies, no matter what part of this city they choose to call home. We will work collaboratively with partners in the community and at all levels of government to see this long overdue project through to completion.

Conclusion

I am honored to serve as this City's 18th Commissioner of Public Safety. I understand the trust that has been given me by the citizens of Saratoga Springs where, by charter, I have been given supervision and control of the operation of the Police and Fire Departments and all of their officers. I will work diligently to earn this trust every day.

COUNTY SUPERVISOR, MATTHEW VEITCH

I am proud to discuss my 2017 accomplishments today and to discuss my plans for 2018. There were many things that were done for both the City and County in 2017. First off, I was proud to have continued in my role as Open Space Committee chairman for the City, and in 2017 we worked hard to preserve areas in the greenbelt. We reviewed and signed off on the Conservation Easement for the Pitney Meadows Community Farm. We were able to have the city purchase a parcel on Loughberry Lake, which protects our watershed, and protects a parcel in our gateway area from development. Lastly, we put forward a plan to have a natural resources inventory done, and we received a CFA grant for \$15,000 for 2018 to get that done. I was proud to represent Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County at both the State and National Association of Counties, and to meet individually with our State and Federal representatives to discuss with them our priorities as a County. I continued to serve on several different committees at the County and served as Chair of the Racing & Gaming committee, and worked on the Equalization and Assessment Committee, and Law & Finance Committees and Trails Committee. I was happy to have been elected the President of the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation, and worked to advocate for our historic architectural past, while looking toward productive and appropriate future development of our City. I attended and participated many community events and was glad to be involved in hearing from our citizens on issues that concern them.

For 2018, I have been selected to Chair the County's Economic Development Committee. The committee has supervision over all County planning matters and activities. It has general oversight of all matters relating to the preservation and improvement of the environment. We deal with all matters regarding transportation and are the liaison with CDTA. The committee consults with industrial and business firms regarding matters of mutual interest and concern; we assist local efforts to attract new business and industry to the County. The Committee oversees the operations of the County's Office of Employment and Training; We are the liaison with County economic development organizations. The Committee is involved with matters relating to preservation and improvement of agriculture, propagation of fish and game birds, reforestation projects and care of trees, and soil conservation. We also connect with the County Fair. As you may have read or seen, the County has two economic development agencies that work toward attracting business to our County. I was a large part of the creation of the County's economic organization, the Prosperity Partnership, and it was an honor serving on their board of directors for the past three years. The truth is, we need a true partnership with the other economic development agency SEDC, and my goal this year is to work to find a way to get the two organizations to come together and work with one purpose for the economic growth and health of our County. Together we are stronger, and the benefits to our City and County are greater when everyone works cooperatively toward the same goal.

I have also been appointed to the Racing & Gaming Committee, Vice-Chairman of the Legislative & Research Committee, and Trails Committee. I will remain as vice-Chairman of the NYSAC Public Safety Committee, and a new member of the National Association of Counties Community, Economic & Workforce Development Steering Committee. I will also remain as President of the Preservation Foundation. It looks to be a busy year and I look forward to great successes in 2018. As always, I welcome any comments or suggestions citizens may have regarding both City and County issues and I hope to hear from you this year.

COUNTY SUPERVISOR, TARA GASTON

All transitions bring with them both uncertainty and hope, and as a newly seated representative of Saratoga Springs I feel these deeply. Over the course of the past year, I met with leaders of government and business, those concerned with economic development, and those focused on arts and environment. Since taking office as Supervisor, these discussions have continued in order to move forward the needs of the City in the course of County government, to continue the goals of former Supervisor Martin and current fellow Supervisor Veitch - who have provided unique perspective and assistance - where appropriate, and to bring new ideas and outlook where I feel it best represents the needs of the City.

Over the next year, I look forward to my work and have set forth a number of objectives. I will continue to make it easier for Saratoga Springs residents to participate in County government, by improving Board transparency and providing increased opportunities for resident access, to ask questions and share concerns. I will be using my position on the Health & Social Services Committee to put County resources to work, including in support of a permanent Code Blue site and securing continuing public health services within the City. I will also be engaged, through the Legislative & Research Committee, in making sure that the confusion of federal and state government do not lead to confusion at the County and local level, and to develop local policies and legislation that best represent the needs and wants of my constituents. All of my work, including on the Board as a whole, will be done with the values of economic security for all, fiscal responsibility, equality, justice, stewardship, and fairness at the forefront.

It is an honor to serve my community, and I am excited and humbled by the task ahead of me, and of us all, over the next year.

CLOSING

In closing, I take such pride in being your Mayor of Saratoga Springs. I am proud to serve this city, one of the best cities in New York State. I know that by working together, we can achieve these goals.

This concludes our State of the City presentation. Thank you for attending.