

Good evening. Welcome to the 2019 Saratoga Springs State of the City Address. As your mayor, it is my honor to give this annual address. Again, I will be delivering this along with my fellow City Council members and County Supervisors. Under a new administration, and unexpected circumstances, we have worked together this year like no other, and this evening will reflect that continued practice.

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

- **State Officials**
- **Former City**
- **Naval Commander**
- **City Officers**
- **City Stakeholders**

Also thank you to Ryan McMahon and the City Center for hosting us once again this year.

I would like to thank my office staff Rachel Petryna at the front desk, Lynn Bachner, my Executive Assistant and Lisa Shields, my Deputy Mayor.

Lastly I thank my family Doug Egan Mary & Paul.

Last year I stated that ‘new administrations bring opportunities for new ideas and traditions’. The lightning strike of 2018 was an extraordinary event that tested us, took us out of the safety and comfort of our workplace and moved us into a gym. Still, City business stops for nothing, and this was no exception.

I believe our response to this event provides remarkable context for the accomplishments of 2018. So I would like to take a few moments to tell the story of extraordinary employees who make this City great.

I will leave the full discussion of City Hall reconstruction to Commissioner Scirocco, head of the Department of Public Works.

### **Lightning Strike – Photo Story**

As many of you know, the City Hall was struck by lightning on Friday evening, [August 17](#), 2018. The building sustained substantial water damage -- a drainage pipe in the roof was struck and melted, causing heavy rains to pour into the building.

We were still assessing the damage at 3:00 am Saturday morning, assembling priorities and organizing under the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. At 8:00 am, I made my first of at least 20 real estate surveys.

While City Hall - the building - was out-of-service, the business of “City Hall” was required to continue. Finding sufficient square footage was only a small part of our relocation challenge:

- IT needs such as cabling and bandwidth
- A location large enough and within the city limits
- Secure storage for money and confidential records

were just some of the issues that had to line up well-enough to serve the City.

While the Recreation Center is a tough sacrifice, it is a temporary one, and ultimately it was the best option.

A disaster that requires the complete evacuation of a major public service hub requires a coordinated effort by every City employee.

Some employees are readily recognizable – Fire, Police, Risk & Safety – and they navigated us through unchartered “*waters*”.

However, many employees are the public servants who work quietly, behind the scenes. The men and women you generally see behind a counter or a desk – became the Relocation Team – and applied their skill and every ounce of energy to organize, move and help prepare for City Hall offices to “re-open”, without regard to department or job title.

And in **less than a week**, you could

- Get a marriage license, a dog license, a paving schedule,
  - Submit an application to the Building and Planning Departments;
  - Pay your taxes, a utility bill, or a parking ticket.
- 
- Vendors continued to be paid on time.
  - The City's information systems never stopped protecting your data.
  - The City was patrolled and protected; the streets were cleaned and flowers watered.
  - Racing season 2018 concluded in its usual, timeless fashion, and summer quietly came to a close.

A few months ago, 'City Hall' was an historic and esteemed building in the heart of downtown Saratoga Springs. Today, I realize that 'City Hall' is more than a place; 'City Hall' is the people who bring their talents, cooperation, and dedication to work every day and provide the excellent public service we experience in our City. Hats off and endless thanks to the employees of the City of Saratoga Springs.

I am a firm believer in pausing to **reflect on prior goals and plans with an eye towards progress**. It is with that spirit I present this State of the City Address.

In 2018, the Mayor's Department alone signed over 56 Agreements, recommended 53 Board appointments, and drafted or supported at least as many initiatives as there have been Council meetings. I have personally had an average of **almost 100 meetings per month**, even during our relocation to the Rec Center, with constituents, stakeholders, organizations, council and staff.

Being available and accessible is my priority and privilege.

To that extent, I have built relationships throughout the city, county, and state. I have reached out and/or joined forces with these entities and organizations, and you can expect this to continue:

New York Racing Authority	Saratoga Community Health Center
Backstretch Employee Assistance Team	Saratoga Springs Public Library
Saratoga Performing Arts Center	Saratoga Springs Arts Council
Saratoga Spa State Park	Saratoga Springs YMCA
Department of Transportation	Yaddo
US Naval Support Activity at Saratoga Springs	Senior Center
New York Conference of Mayors	Franklin Community Center
Skidmore College	Southwest Neighborhood Association
Capital District Transportation Committee	Wellspring
Capital District Transportation Authority	Downtown Business Association
Saratoga Builders Association	Farmers Market
Saratoga Economic Development Corporation	Code Blue
Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership	Shelters of Saratoga
Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council	Universal Preservation Hall
Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce	Affordable Housing Developers
Saratoga Springs City Center	Sustainable Saratoga
Discover Saratoga	Local Restaurants
Saratoga Convention and Tourism Bureau	Local Banks
Saratoga Springs City School District	Local Businesses
Saratoga Hospital	Citizen Stakeholder

I firmly believe that our City is more solid than it ever has been thanks to the progress we have made forming fair, open and mutual working relationships with key stakeholders, including citizens, grass roots organizations, public and private entities. They are invaluable to the strength of our community.

Now, I am pleased to present highlights from each of the Mayor's departments.

**[Recreation Department]**

I must take this moment to comment on the work of our Recreation Department. During the same year that their space was re-purposed to manage the emergency of City Hall, they have not lost sight of their mission.

The Recreation Department reports that its top three 2018 accomplishments include:

- ***Increased Summer Program, Clinic, and Camp enrollment*** by 7% compared to 2017.
- Developed a ***new Pickle ball League*** for adults, maxing out in its first season.
- Implemented and managed ***over \$190,000 in facility improvements*** toward playgrounds, softball fields, baseball fields, rec center gym, and skate park.

Thanks to the leadership and professionalism of our Recreation Administrator John Hirliman and his employees, and the guidance of our Recreation Commission, the Recreation Department responded to the loss of its space, regrouped and reestablished programs for children and adults all over this city. Reaching out to the relationships fostered with the YMCA, Saratoga Springs Schools, St. Clements School, Spa Catholic High School and Gavin Park in Wilton, the Recreation Department continues to serve the City in every way.

Thank you all for your remarkable response to extraordinary circumstances.

Having witnessed 2018, I have no doubt it will complete its 2019 objectives and more, which include:

- Completing the *Recreation Master Plan*.
- Renovating the *Veterans Memorial Park Playground*.
- Developing one new recreation program while *increasing overall program registration by 3%*.



## **[Office of Planning and Economic Development]**

Saratoga Springs continues to experience robust growth. Our staff in the Planning Department manages a variety of capital and infrastructure projects within the city, as well as provides technical assistance during the design process to applicants and the City's Land Use Boards. Our 2018 highlights include:

- ***Over \$250 Million in Estimated Construction Value***, which is an increase of 82% compared to 2017, and reflects some large projects, like the Skidmore and Intrada projects, making their way through the Land Use Boards and receiving Building Permits last year.
  
- ***Development and City Council approval of a concept plan for Flat Rock Park on Lake Avenue to include:***
  - A public park featuring the revival of Flat Rock Spring,
  - Incorporation of the Greenbelt Trail's Downtown Connector,
  - Interconnection to High Rock Park,
  - A much needed municipal parking structure, and
  - Outparcels for future development.
  
- ***Several new Bikeshare locations*** installed including Railroad Run, the Lincoln Bathhouses, and the East Side Rec.

- ***Completion of the ‘Economic Impact of Historic Properties Study’*** in conjunction with the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation.

The City’s **Community Development** program administered over \$350K 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.

Efforts in affordable housing throughout the City also saw much success this past year. Currently, there are several affordable housing projects at various stages in the approval process, which will add hundreds of new affordable housing units to the City.

- ***Intrada***, is a project on the west side of the City, broke ground this past summer. This development includes 158 affordable housing units, as well as over 10 acres for public recreation.
- ***The Link @ SoBro***, will provide 106 affordable housing units, in addition to a small business incubator space to be managed by the Saratoga Economic Development Corporation. The Community Development Department facilitated an Economic Development Loan in the amount of \$105,000 for the project. It is set to break ground summer 2019.

- *The Promenade at Stonequist*, will add 63 affordable housing units, including 18 townhouses and 45 apartments. Not only will this project add much needed housing to the City, but also vastly improve the streetscape of West Circular Street.

### **[Parks, Open Lands, Historic Preservation and Sustainability]**

Saratoga Springs strives to incorporate sustainability into all of its practices, projects and operations. In 2018, through the office of the Administrator of Parks, Open Lands, Historic Preservation, the **City of Saratoga Springs received \$75,000** in grants:

- Saratoga County Farmland Protection Open Space program,
- the Saratoga County Trails program, and
- CDTC SMART Communities Program.

An additional \$2.9 million in grants are being managed for clean transportation, open space, natural resources, and trails.

To highlight the City's sustainability goals and projects, and in partnership with the Commissioner of Finance, I am proud to announce a **new sustainability-landing page on our city website**. Commissioner Madigan will share more information on this new page during her presentation.

More of this year's highlights include:

- ***Saratoga Greenbelt Trail:*** In 2018, the city progressed preliminary designs for roughly 3.7 miles of new trails linking the Saratoga Spa State Park to downtown, Congress Park, High Rock Park, Spring Run Trail and our new urban development along Excelsior Avenue.

Coordinating with the Complete Streets Advisory Committee and the Department of Public Safety, we plan to host a 2-day demonstration of a potential design on Henry Street.

- ***Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:*** In 2018, the city opened its first two public electric vehicle-charging stations, making it easier and more affordable for Saratogians and our visitors to use environmentally friendly electric vehicles.
- ***Natural Resource Inventory:*** The City was awarded grant funding through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to complete a Natural Resource Inventory. The NRI is the first step to determine the baseline for updating the 2002 Open Space Resource Plan.

**New and continuing projects and expansions for 2019 will include:**

- *Continued development of the City's Unified Development Ordinance*, with completion anticipated in 2019.
  
- Notable developments on the Washington Street corridor:
  - including *Universal Preservation Hall*,
  - *Adelphi Boutique Hotel & Spa*,
  - the *Bethesda Church*'s expansion and
  - Enhancements to existing structures and
  - New and upgraded infrastructure.
  
- In the historic district, the project at *385 Broadway* includes two Broadway-facing storefronts, and one internal, for a total of 10,000 sq ft of commercial space, as well as 69 residential units.
  
- Outside of the downtown center, the *Station Lane area* will continue to be actively developed through four distinct projects, which include hundreds of residential units, including affordable housing, as well as commercial and civic space.
  
- Continued work to find suitable land for an *East Side Fire Station is under way*. I know this is a priority the entire City Council shares, and I am currently talking with two entities in attempts to develop an opportunity.

- As the City Center moves forward with Phase 1 of the ***Flat Rock Centre***, we will pursue Phase 2 funding and develop a preliminary design.
- In the Arts arena, we expect to develop a ***City Public Arts Master Plan*** in conjunction with the Saratoga Springs Arts Commission.
- We will also develop and explore funding opportunities for ***Saratoga Artscape***; a public arts initiative along Railroad Run from the Beekman Street Arts District to SPAC.
- Construction of the long anticipated ***Geyser Road Trail*** will commence, providing an additional 2+ miles of trail to Saratoga Springs' trail system, and advancing connectivity to our State Park trails.

## **Building Department**

The Building Department provides services that support the construction process and is responsible for reviewing plans and issuing permits, performing inspections and enforcing compliance with New York State Building Codes and local zoning regulations. In addition, the Building Department supports the planning staff in reviewing code and especially zoning compliance.

The typical winter slow-down is a thing of the past, and requests for building permits were on a steady increase early in 2018. The backlog of applications was not sustainable.

With the help of Human Resources and the Finance office, we **hired an additional building inspector** and initiated important **process improvements**. By the last quarter of 2018, we were already reaping the benefits of both.

This year the department issued a record **1001 permits**. This represents a **17% increase** over last year. Revenues in 2018 for permits grew 57%, another indicator of the size and volume of projects in the City. **370 CO's** were also issued in 2018, an **increase of 8%** over 2017.

Naturally, with such strong construction activity, the demand for inspections has also increased: our inspectors performed **2205 inspections last year, averaging 12 inspections per day**. The large projects currently in development throughout the city are expected to drive up the number of requests for inspections even further this year.

By itself, the daily demand for 12 inspections requires the time of more than two inspectors to be scheduled, in order to avoid causing delays in construction. We have already seen the improvements in our production since adding a fifth inspector.

The growth in zoning reviews, compliance matters and requests for zoning determinations has reached a significant level, and this is an opportunity for us going forward. This workload currently represents **more than 20%** of the overall building department activity.

The increase in staff has directly affected the average time to issue a permit, which has been **reduced from 10-12 weeks to about 30-40 days...more than 35% faster**. And the backlog of permit applications has been **reduced by more than half!** While there are many factors that contribute to the review time, we will implement process improvements again this year and continue increasing our level of service.



## **Focus 2019**

Since we no longer experience a “lull” in the construction season, if we hope to provide consistent, quality service and to be responsive to higher volumes of applications in 2019, we must continue focusing on efficiency.

Both the Planning and Building Departments have active projects focused on optimal response times through process improvements and maximizing efficiencies. Some of these are:

- Reducing our paper files by archiving project documents on our Laserfiche system and
- Providing applicants and Land Use Board members online access to those files, and
- Employing geographic information systems (GIS) tools and applications to improve visibility and communication about development in the City.

We will further analyze the zoning-related activities in the Planning and Building Departments and define the resources required to improve our review processes for zoning compliance.

In 2019, the *Board of Plumbing Examiners*, will be licensing plumbers in our City for the first time in 10-15 years. The Board was re-established in August 2018 as required by the City Code 171.

The City has been without this Board, although it is called for in our City Code. This means that a plumber was unable to get a plumbing license in Saratoga Springs. In order to do plumbing work in Saratoga Springs, which requires a plumbing permit from the Building Department, a plumber had to be licensed in another city.

It also means that the City has foregone revenue for plumbing licenses and fees.

The new Board has five members: 2 Master Plumbers, and 1 Journeyman (plumber); the city's Plumbing Inspector, and the City Engineer or designee.

In conjunction with the resurrection of this Board, I asked to have City Code Title 171 reviewed and re-vamped in accordance with the Board of Plumbing Examiners requirements.

## **[Offices of the City Attorney and Human Resources]**

The City Attorney's Office serves as general legal advisor and is responsible for providing legal services and guidance to the City and all its departments and entities. Likewise, the Human Resources Office serves all of the employees and departments in the City.

### **City Attorney's Office:**

- Works with the Building and Zoning Enforcement officers to ensure compliance with all Federal, State and City laws.
- Participates in Union contract negotiations and is responsible for the prosecution of all Article 78 matters.
- Saves the City legal fees and expenses on matters that historically were handled by outside legal counsel.
- Responsible for FOIL requests: 254 FOIL requests were processed in 2018, ensuring that we continue to operate in a manner that is as transparent and open as possible.

## **Human Resources Office:**

Most of the attention for the HR office is focused internally. A few items that may be of interest to the public include:

- Coordinated Community Donations Program in 2018
- 2019 Goals: Establish Succession Planning; and Improve Recruiting Efforts

## **Office of the City Historian**

The City Historian holds a special position in a city like Saratoga Springs. 2018 brought many opportunities to share history in various venues and formats.

Highlights include:

- ***Saratoga Springs Public Library Brown Bag Program***, including a special feature entitled **Echoes from the Mill: Clark Textile and Van Raalte**.
- ***Publication in the Heritage Hunters of Saratoga County Newsletter October/November 2018 issue***, entitled “Clark’s Silk Gloves, Made in Saratoga Springs Where Health and Fashion Meet.”

2019 objectives include opportunities for collaborative and continuing education such as development of the **Saratoga Collaborative County History Roundtable**, a new group of historians, librarians, museum staff, and history buffs embarking

upon a venture to identify any oral history that has been recorded, create an inventory, have it digitized and made accessible.

## **Volunteers**

I cannot complete a recounting of the Mayor's Department and City's 2018 success without commending our volunteers. Our form of government relies on their input, expertise and efforts. Volunteers and community engagement is outstanding in Saratoga Springs. We sincerely thank you for taking your time to reach out, speak up, advise and serve!

## **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. We are **interdependent** and **serve all residents together**. **Collaboration** and building **consensus** amongst our departments is critical. Creating opportunities to work more **efficiently** is important to all of us.

In government, there is an absolute need to work together. The events of 2018 epitomized that notion, and I believe we are 'teed up' for a tremendous year!

[Referring to the Council...]

May I say, once again, that our mutual civility and leadership have made this City as strong as it has ever been, when it needed to be as strong as it could be!

I will now turn the floor over to my fellow Council members and County Supervisors.

Now on to Commissioner Franck...

**ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT, JOHN FRANCK**

Good evening fellow Saratogians.

I have had the privilege of serving as your Commissioner of Accounts since 2006. This is my 7th term and my 14th State of the City Address. I would like to thank Mayor Kelly for her graciousness this evening in giving me the opportunity to share the City's Accounts Department community initiatives with you. I also would like to thank my wife Stephanie for having the patience of Job, it is not an easy task being married to a politician.

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 2019 in cooperation with other federal and state agencies and departments within the City: (CHANGE SLIDE TO PEDDLING AND VENDING EXEMPTIONS FOR MINORS SLIDE ONE)

**1. Peddling and Vending Legislation: Exemptions for Minors:**

The Accounts Department completed an extensive review of the City's Peddling and Vending Licensure in 2018 with the assistance of the City Attorney's Office, Public Safety, Planning and Public Works. A new streamlined ordinance was developed which included a specific exemption for the entrepreneurial spirit of our community's children. The exemption provides our community's children with the opportunity to sell bottled water and "lucky pencils during the annual thoroughbred track at specific locations on and adjacent to Frank Sullivan Place. (CHANGE SLIDE TO PEDDLING AND VENDING EXEMPTIONS FOR MINORS SLIDE TWO)

There are basic rules associated with this new Minor Exemption that provide guidance with regard to age and the documentation needed to obtain a "Minor Vendor's Badge." There is NO COST associated with this application and its exemption. (CHANGE TO SLIDE FEDERAL HIGHWAY AUTHORITY NYS DOT ADA PROGRAMMING)

**2. Federal Highway Authority NYS Department of Transportation Division: ADA:**

The Office of Risk and Safety is continuing its work with ADA programming for our community.

Accessibility is a priority for both our residents and the 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.

Our Skidmore Risk and Safety Interns working under the direction of the Director of Risk and Safety have developed an on-line web-based tool to utilize electronic devices to capture roadway intersections and sidewalks, map them using GIS technology, and identify next steps for repair or replacement. The programming has been shared with the Capital District Transportation Committee has been well received by other local municipalities as an interactive tool that cost effectively benefits the community including our own. (CHANGE SLIDE TO SAFETY COMMITTEE)

**3. Safety Committee Emergency Management Planning:**

The Safety Committee is continuing its work with the Saratoga County Local Emergency Planning Committee of which the City's Director of Risk and Safety Chairs. Emergency planning is important to each of us as we

prepare ourselves and our prospective 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. (CHANGE SLIDE TO SPECIAL EVENTS)

#### **4. Special Event Programming:**

The Accounts Department, Risk and Safety and the City Safety Committee continue to assist in planning 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 continue to meet 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. (CHANGE SLIDE TO ASSESSMENT DEPARTMENT)

#### **5. Assessments:**

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. 2018 saw the least number of Grievances at 41.

In 2018 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 deadline.

The Office continues to offer a yearly Grievance Class to help educate and inform property owners. This includes explanation of assessment. In many instances owners find they are properly assessed and therefore do not need to file.

The Department of Taxation and Finance has changed the Exemption criteria for Senior Citizens and has effected close to 500 seniors in the City. The requirement is confusing to many and requires the addition of multiple applications and documentation. The Assessment Office is inundated with calls and questions. Residents are confused about what needs to be submitted. We walk them through it over the phone or have them come in to the office and we walk them through it step by step. That will result in the state not issuing a denial.

In order to make the Renewal process easier for the Senior Citizens the Assessment Office has changed the Tax year required for proof of income. For the 2019 tax year we will be using the 2018 Tax Return the same one we use for the Enhanced STAR exemption. This alleviates the stress and pressures to have the 2018 tax return prepared and submitted before the March 1st deadline.

**I would like to take this opportunity to state that I will NOT be reassessing the City in 2019. Our annual level of assessment is in compliance with NYS guidelines and the cost of reassessment far outweighs the benefits.** (CHANGE SLIDE TO RECORDS RET)

#### **6. 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 customers' inquiries.



My department is working with Finance and IT to automate the “Cash Receivable Process” thereby eliminating the annual accumulation of 12 cubic feet of records going forward.

We have obtained estimates for the professional scanning of various records that have permanent or long-term retention. These proposals will be used in 2019 to move toward the digitization of as many of our permanent records as possible. We have updated the City’s Laserfiche Program to accommodate an anticipated large quantity of digitized records in 2019.

We have completed the scanning into Laserfiche of all of the minutes and important attachments of the Recreation Commission, resulting in the streamlining of those files and the disposal of 12 cubic feet of obsolete and duplicate records. The minutes are now text searchable and will soon be a portal to all of the records in Laserfiche available through the City's website.

Most importantly, we are now fully utilizing and accessing previously scanned images of the City's birth, death, marriage and genealogy records in order to efficiently serve the taxpayers of this City. It is no longer necessary to require community members to go to Albany to obtain their birth certificate. We can do it online in just a few minutes.

(CHANGE SLIDE TO ACCOUNTS DEPT TEAM)

**Conclusion:**

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. (CHANGE SLIDE TO ACCOUNTS DEPT FUTURE INITIATIVES)

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 in 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.

God Bless all of you, God Bless America and most importantly God Bless Saratoga Springs! THANK YOU

**DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE, COMMISSIONER MADIGAN**

(1) Thank you Mayor for again giving City Council members the opportunity to participate in the State of the City Address. The lightning strike and related-strain on City operations made 2018 my most unique year in office to-date, though I'm proud to say that it was also a very productive year for the Finance Department as a whole. We have entered 2019 with several goals all of which will contribute to the success of the City and our residents.

Before I get to these goals, last year my lead slide had a single bullet point for the IT Department. The lightning strike highlighted just how critical IT is across City Hall, so this year I decided to speak to some of what the team does such as:

- Securing and protecting the City's network;
- Overseeing the consistent cycle of hardware upgrades;
- Providing timely support across dozens of systems and applications;
- Working to streamline City processes;
- And ensuring the City is well-prepared to handle any emergency.

That last bullet point had largely been a theoretical exercise until we were forced out of City Hall, at which point the IT Department rose to the occasion and ensured City operations were functioning within days, not weeks or months, but days! Why did we recover so quickly? Well, it was because the IT Department, under the direction of Kevin Kling, has spent much time last few years ensuring adequate fiber infrastructure between City Hall and our other facilities – the Recreation Center, the Ice Rink, Fire Stations, Police Department, the DPW Garage, and other buildings. It is the City's fiber connection to the Recreation Center that ensured employees did not miss a paycheck, and that all essential services (like paying taxes and utility bills or obtaining the various licenses people need) were up and running within a few short days. Again, I want to thank IT for providing the technical foundation that allowed the City to quickly respond to this emergency.

(2) Turning to the City's finances, the 2019 General Fund Operating Budget increased 2.1% 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 seven straight years, which coincides with my time as Commissioner of Finance. As our vibrant City grows and adapts to an ever-changing economy, efficiently managing City resources remains a critical function of the Finance Office. I want to thank this City Council for supporting my efforts to offer stellar services to our residents and businesses at a cost that they can afford.

In 2018 this focus on resource management allowed the City to retain its strong bond rating, receive another positive audit report, and continue to maintain a healthy fund balance along with several reserve funds. Additionally, the City's IT Department continued 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 software and tools to help City employees get things done. These improvements make your interactions with City Hall easier, and also contribute positively to the City's bottom line.

As I discussed during the 2019 Budget presentations, the renovation of City Hall was the focus of this year's budget and DPW will speak to the progress made shortly. These renovations will not only repair the damage done by the lightning strike and related water damage, but will allow for safety, layout, and energy improvements that would have been nearly impossible to achieve while City Hall was operational.

Providing budgetary support for cost-saving and process efficiencies continues to be a goal of mine and this was evident across departments in 2018, including the adoption of new technology by DPW, creative solutions for

budgetary hurdles found by DPS, the use of outside services to assist in the Assessment process, and the reorganization of the Building Department by the Mayor's Office.

Another budgetary focus is Healthcare costs, which effect all departments and represent one of the City's largest expenses. In the coming weeks I hope to have additional information on changes to the City's healthcare strategy that will be beneficial to the City employees and the City's budget in a material way.

(3) Looking back on last year's State of the City address, I laid out several goals and projects I hoped to achieve in 2018. First and foremost was the successful adoption of a 2019 City Budget, which I alluded to earlier. The unanimous approval of this budget in November represented months of work and countless revisions across departments. The result is an excellent budget for City Departments and taxpayers.

Turning to specific projects, in 2018 the City Council approved a contract with SiFi Networks to design, install, and maintain a fiber network that will be available to every home and business in the City. A relatively new entrant to the U.S. broadband market, SiFi Networks was chosen based on the pedigree of their team, the industry experts they partner with (such as Nokia), and the quality of their response. They also met all of our contractual needs to ensure the City is well-prepared for any issues that may arise. The project is currently in the early-planning stages, but I look forward to its eventual completion which will be a technological game-changer for Saratoga Springs and an economic driver for the City economy.

Additionally, Finance supported several projects to spur prosperity and opportunity through economic development in 2018, including:

- Partnering with the Saratoga Performing Arts Center to showcase Saratoga Springs as a world-wide arts destination;
- Submitting a grant proposal for the redevelopment of Universal Hall with Proctor's that resulted in \$750,000 of State funding. The City also contributed \$50,000 toward the renovation to show the State our commitment to the project, which has the potential to be an economic engine for the entire City;
- And assisting on multiple affordable housing projects that will ensure working individuals and families can be part of the City's dynamic growth.

In 2018 Finance also made progress on several energy initiatives, which I will discuss shortly.

Two other projects that my department worked on in 2018 were short-term rentals and community solar. In last year's address, I spoke of how the growth of companies like AirBNB has resulted in an explosion of the short-term rental market throughout the City, and the related quality-of-life and fiscal fairness concerns. Through countless meetings and calls we've determined that a resolution on this issue will need to be driven by the County or State. We continue to monitor this market and will add our voice in support of appropriate solutions.

Regarding community solar, the next slide will highlight the City's success with the Spa Solar Park, and it was my intent to bring forward a similar project that could directly benefit City residents. Unfortunately, regulatory changes and operational hurdles have shown that a City-run community solar project is untenable at this time. It does appear that some external providers have begun offering community solar programs in-and-around the City, and my hope is that they allow residents economic and environmental benefits similar to what the City has experienced firsthand.

(4) Turning to the topic of energy, on August 22<sup>nd</sup> of 2017 all 7,992 solar panels installed at the Spa Solar Park were energized, and as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2018, the facility has generated 3.6 million kilowatt hours of electricity. Financially, this generation represents over \$60k of utility expense savings for the City. Environmentally, 3.6 million kilowatt hours of electricity represents roughly 108,000 gallons of fuel saved, or 1.3 million trees worth of carbon dioxide being offset. These savings have gone far beyond our initial

projections, and in 2019 we will be expanding the number of City utility bills receiving solar park credits from 11 to 19.

In April of 2018, the City Council unanimously approved a Municipal Agreement and Membership Letter with "Energize NY PACE Finance", a NYSERDA-and-Department of Energy funded program that works to increase clean energy adoption across New York State. Energize accomplishes this by covering 100% of the up-front funding for non-residential green projects through long-term, competitively-priced financing. No projects have been funded through Energize in the City just yet, though we have been made aware of pending applications. I will update the City Council and public as we learn more.

One reason Energize hasn't seen many applications to date is because the public is unaware of the program's existence. This issue is similar to feedback we've received on other City energy and sustainability initiatives, so to address this problem Finance has partnered with the Mayor's Office to create a centralized hub about sustainability-related programs for residents.

(5) What you see on the screen is a draft of that hub. Tina Carton, who has been an invaluable resource to the City with her sustainability experience and expertise, has been working on this for several weeks and will make a formal City Council presentation in February. I don't want to give away too much of what she will discuss, but as you can see, the hub will:

- direct residents to programs and services like Energize, the Greenbelt Trail, and EV charging stations, and;
- highlight all the City has done in our prioritization of sustainability, such as our energy benchmarking, the various City entities working on solutions, and individual City achievements, such as the steps taken by DPW that allowed Saratoga Springs to be deemed a Tree City by the Arbor Day Foundation.

Sustainability is important to the City for a variety of reasons, such as the environmental benefits, planning implications, and positive fiscal ramifications. I want to thank the Mayor's Office for partnering with Finance to highlight all the City has done, and what is available to local residents and businesses.

(6) 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. Last year I spoke on progress made in various 1.0 initiatives, such as public Wi-Fi. Going into 2019, my goal with the Smart City Committee is to reorganize the group and focus our efforts on 1 or 2 large scale projects to benefit the City and its residents. Beyond the impressive list of member organizations listed on screen, the Committee includes a variety of local tech experts and CIOs who have dedicated time and energy to the group. My early 2019 feedback has been encouraging, and I look forward to using the Committee's collective talents to bring forward transformative Smart City initiatives that will position Saratoga Springs to be a model Future City.

The Smart City Commission, along with IgniteU and local sponsors, will also be hosting an Economic Development Lunch & Learn Series at the City Center this year. The first event, "The AI Opportunity", was held on January 24<sup>th</sup>, and we had over 100 attendees including local businesses, industry experts, elected officials, and interested residents. The goal of this series is to highlight local tech success stories, and to create a collaborative environment to spur future innovation, investment, and growth. For information on future events, please be sure to follow the City social media accounts.

(7) Looking to the future, there are four main priorities I'm focused on for 2019.

First and foremost is always the budget. While the renovation of City Hall is the large project on everyone's mind, there are a variety of projects in the works that will have material capital and operating costs, include the

creation of Flat Rock Park, an East Side Fire/EMS Station, and improvements to Loughberry Lake Dam. These are each multi-million dollar projects with uncertainty around ultimate costs. I would ask that those involved continue to push for external funding sources, and to think creatively for solutions that best position the City for the future. In regard to the operating budget, the City will also need to adapt to changes outside the City's control, such as the impact of rising interest rates on the housing market, federally mandated changes that impact the cost of healthcare, and technological changes that disrupt traditional local markets.

In regard of how the City interacts with the public, the 2019 budget included funding for an experienced Communication hire. This individual will have a role in communications City-wide, including improving the usability of the City website, expanding the City's social media presence, and ensuring a consistent and professional message is conveyed to the press and public. How people find and engage with local news has changed dramatically over recent years, and it is my goal to hire someone that can clearly communicate all of the good work being done across City Hall.

I spoke about sustainability several times today, and it will continue to be an area I advocate for in 2019. The City has shown these projects can be good both environmentally and financially, and I will do all that I can to ensure we are at the forefront for sustainability in the region, whether that means supporting our beautiful urban forest or participating in local alternative energy initiatives.

Lastly, the City is in a unique position to leverage technology and use all the information available to foster material quality-of-life and safety improvements for our constituents. I aim to build on the Smart City achievements to date and bring forward projects that will benefit the City and its residents in impactful, tangible ways. The Smart City Commission has been one of the most professionally and personally fulfilling endeavors I've ever been part of, and I very much look forward to what 2019 will bring.

Thank you all for your time, and I look forward to a happy, healthy, and successful 2019.

**PUBLIC WORKS, SKIP SCIROCCO****(SLIDE 1)**

It's no secret that the priority for DPW heading into 2019 is to complete the City Hall restoration and renovation project. Everyday our staff is focused and working on this project, and will continue to do so diligently, until completion.

**(SLIDE 2)**

Following the initial response of the Emergency Management Plan, DPW began work on two very demanding projects, the first was transitioning the rec center into a temporary City Hall, and the second was the restoration and renovation project for City Hall.

The rec center transition took approximately five to six weeks. The first two weeks consisted of planning the space layout, setup of IT or electrical connections, and logistics of the move from City Hall. City staff worked collaboratively in following a plan to tag all items in City Hall that needed to be moved, stored, or discarded. The physical moving of items from City Hall to the rec center took three weeks; a moving company was utilized for some of the larger items while a majority of the buildings contents were moved by DPW crews.

There is ongoing work to make the rec center more accommodating to staff and residents, but this has been a monumental effort that took the dedication of a number of City Staff that I would like to especially recognize. The DPW Business Manager Mike Veitch project managed all aspects of turning the Rec Center into a temporary City Hall. Mike coordinated with the council and all city staff to meet their needs and make sure the transition was as seamless as possible. DPW Deputy Commissioner Joe O'Neil was responsible for directing DPW crews in the physical move, and special recognition to laborer Tom Brown who coordinated much of the work in City Hall. The DPW electricians Dan Rancour, Dave Kownak, and Josh Gregory carefully worked to make sure the building was wired for office needs. They worked in partnership with the IT Department, including Kevin Kling, Patrick Mahoney, Jim Baker, and Jeff Cornick to make certain work stations were operational for staff. This core team, and many other city employees, made the impossible a reality and continue to shine in difficult circumstances.

**(SLIDE 2)**

At the same time, DPW has been working diligently on the restoration and renovation of City Hall. This has been a collaborative effort unlike anything I've seen before. The entire City Council and city staff have worked together to put City Hall back together. Recognizing that the lightning strike created an opportunity with the building essentially vacated, the plan to renovate the entire building will pay long term dividends.

The City contracted with one of our designated engineers, Clark Patterson Lee, to assist with the project. Since that time, we've been working with the council, staff, architects, engineers, and the Office of Court Administration on the renovation. The project will have four main phases, the first is asbestos abatement, followed by conceptual design, next is bid for construction, and the final phase is construction renovation. The completion timeframe for this project is the fourth quarter of 2019.



I'm happy to report today that we are on schedule to meet this deadline.

**(SLIDE 3)**

The project has many goals, but the overall objective is preserving City Hall's historic charm, while updating the building's infrastructure and layout to improve the delivery of services to the public.

By utilizing space in the building more effectively, the decades long identified problem of city hall lacking space will be resolved. So too will be the legislative mandate to provide more space to accommodate the second full time city court judge. Joining the police administration with the police department on the ground floor will also resolve the longstanding problem of a disjointed police department.

Addressing these problems separately could have carried a significant price tag in the tens of millions of dollars, and might have taken years if not decades to complete. As a result of working collaboratively, these previously unanswered problems will be addressed for considerably less and in approximately a year.

**(SLIDE 4)**

The City Hall project has not interfered with the ongoing work DPW provides in service to the city. The following is just a brief list of some of the major projects for DPW in 2018 and 2019.

The Restoration of the Katrina Trask gateway, the new DPW Dispatch building will be opened, and the final phase of the fleet management and GPS system will be implemented in the spring.

In 2018 we successfully repaired multiple roadways in the City utilizing over \$800,000 in CHIPs funding, and DPW purchased a new asphalt re-claimer to improve road maintenance and repair in 2019.

Improvements in corrosion control at the water treatment plant have shown positive results resulting in lower appearances of lead in water. If another round of testing demonstrates similar results, the Department of Health will allow for reduced testing because the treatments are working.

Meanwhile, the services residents have come rely on such as lawn debris pickup, roadway repair, snow and ice removal – even with this most recent very difficult storm – continue as normal without interruption.

In 2019 DPW will continue to focus on infrastructure and teamwork, and our employees are optimistically tackling the unexpected challenges 2018 presented. The state of DPW heading into 2019 is strong, determined, and together.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, COMMISSIONER MARTIN**

Thank you Mayor, and thank you fellow members of the City Council.

The Department of Public Safety is responsible for police and fire/EMS services in the City of Saratoga Springs. It also oversees code enforcement, traffic maintenance, and parking enforcement. As of January 2019, the Department has 162 full-time employees, and 40 part-time employees.

Full-time employees include:

- 74 police officers
- 63 firefighters
- 2 code enforcement officers
- 3 members of our traffic maintenance team
- 2 parking enforcement officers
- 11 dispatchers
- 5 administrative staff members

Part-time employees include:

- 16 school crossing guards
- 2 part-time traffic team members
- 20 traffic controllers to assist at the Saratoga Racetrack
- 2 cleaners

As we begin a new year, I reflect on what was a consequential year for both police and fire, and look forward to great things in 2019.

The Police Department is nearing full staffing for the first time in a decade. This has improved the department's ability to serve a rapidly growing, and ever busier, community.

Crime remained low in 2018. In 2017, there were 56 violent crimes, defined as murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault and in 2018 there were 54 violent crimes. These are low numbers for a city of over 28,000 residents and hundreds of thousands of visitors. In 2017, there were 457 property crimes defined as burglary, larceny, and vehicle offenses, and in 2018 this number fell to 421 property crimes. The police department has increased foot patrols in the downtown core to deter crime, a policy we intend to continue in 2019.

A major department initiative undertaken in 2018 was the creation of the Saratoga Springs Citizens Advisory Board. The board consists of ten members, representing a diverse cross-section of the community. Its purpose is to advise the Commissioner of Public Safety and the Chief of Police on both policy and community relations. The Board will be a two-way line of communication between the public and our police department. I would like to thank the members of the board for two very productive initial meetings. We look forward to meeting over the coming months and continuing to strengthen police-community relations in Saratoga Springs.

The Saratoga Springs Police Department undertakes extensive training every year, and 2018 was no exception. Last year, department personnel spent over 4,200 hours in training, and covered numerous topics. Training topics included firearms, defensive tactics, taser use, active shooter, CPR, supervisory, domestic violence, and detecting suspicious behaviors in crowds. Our department is proud to log some of the most training (and most



diverse areas of training) in the state. We will continue to learn all we can about how best to protect and serve the City of Saratoga Springs.

Another critical facet of safety in any city is traffic maintenance. The Saratoga Springs Traffic Department maintains traffic signals and signs and pavement markings over about 148 miles of city roads. This year we will work cooperatively with area business organizations to improve parking regulation in the downtown.

We will continue to expand upon our existing infrastructure by continuing to pursue the best experience possible for all modes of transportation. The City is currently pursuing a number of grant opportunities to make new projects possible. In 2019, the department will undertake an upgrade of the pedestrian crossings at Union Avenue and Regent Street and Union Avenue and Clark Street. Additionally, we are in the process of seeking funding to upgrade the crosswalks at Church Street and Woodlawn Avenue and Church Street and Railroad Place, a substantial portion of which has already been secured. Also 2019 will see the installation of bike lanes along much of Lake Avenue, and other temporary and permanent additions to Complete Streets in our city.

The Saratoga Springs Fire Department saw growth and positive changes in this last year. The Department is currently staffed at 63 firefighters, including command staff. We will continue to do all we can to assure adequate fire staffing to meet the city's needs in the coming year. The number of fires to which the department responded this year decreased by 11 from the prior year. Although response times remaining stable in our three designated fire districts, the gap in response times to district 3 demonstrates the need for a third firehouse.

Emergency medical services continue to be a core part of the Fire Department's operations. The fire department responded to 3,804 medical calls in 2018. EMS revenue increased by 26% or \$271,538 over 2017.

The city's growth also brings with it the need for expanded fire services. An important initiative for the fire department continues to be the establishment of a third fire station to serve the city's eastern ridge and Saratoga Lake. The department has had a number of conversations with property owners, and we remain committed to making fire station 3 a reality.

A major goal is fire prevention through inspections and education. This year, the Department of Code Enforcement and the Office of Fire Prevention have been combined into a new Fire Prevention Battalion. The battalion will be under the command of Battalion Chief Aaron Dyer, with the continued support of Code Administrator Jack Donnelly. Because of significant growth in both residential and commercial properties, it crucial that we provide cutting edge building and fire code enforcement services to ensure the safety of residents and visitors alike. In that vein, I am pleased to announce that Chief Dyer and Code Administrator Donnelly will be introducing a fire safety education program to ensure members of the public know how to stay safe and to prevent tragedy before it happens. We will also increase efforts to regulate short term rentals for the safety of our visitors and neighborhoods.

Our vacant structure program has been a major success for the Department of Public Safety over the past several years. 2018 was its best year yet. I am pleased to announce registration of vacant structures in the city is nearly 100%. Similarly, payment of vacant structure fees was nearly 90% in 2018. This was a significant improvement over just a few years ago, when just over half the vacant structures in the city were registered, and even fewer fees were paid.

The goal of this program is simple: to eliminate unsafe structures and preserve the loss of historic buildings. To that end, I will introduce legislation to toughen the penalties on those who allow buildings to crumble through willful neglect or let historic structures to fall into disrepair.

Finally, this year marks a milestone for the Saratoga Springs Fire Department. Chief Robert Williams will be retiring on February 28<sup>th</sup> after 35 years of service to our city. As a third generation firefighter, and second generation fire chief, there can be no doubt that Bob has set a powerful example for anyone in public service. He led the charge to bring the fire department into the digital age, focusing heavily on operations management and integration of new technology. His leadership during and in the immediate aftermath of the fire at City Hall exemplified the qualities that made him a truly great fire chief.

As one era ends, another begins as Joseph Dolan assumes the role of fire chief. In his twenty years of service to the department, Chief Dolan has demonstrated himself to be a proven leader. I have full confidence in Chief Dolan and look forward to the great things our department will achieve under his leadership.

In closing, I am looking forward to the year ahead. This year will see a heavy focus on community engagement. A greater focus on community policing and the fire prevention education program both provide opportunities to connect with the public we are proud to serve. We look forward to providing safer and healthier transportation options to residents and visitors alike. Finally, we remain committed to keeping Saratoga Springs one of the safest cities in the State of New York. Thank you and I wish you a healthy and happy 2019.

**COUNTY SUPERVISOR, MATTHEW VEITCH**

Thank you, Mayor Kelly, for giving me some time at the State of the City address to share some of what I have been working on as Supervisor. I'm proud to be able to represent this great City at the County level, and to serve our constituents in my capacity as Supervisor.

**First, I will review accomplishments from 2018.** It was a busy year at the County, where we began construction on a new public safety facility in the Town of Milton near the Jail, to expand administrative space for the Sheriff, as well as to move the probation and Public Health departments to that space. As for me, it was an honor to serve as the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, and to highlight what makes our County an attractive place to do business. At the last State of the City address, I expressed my goal of attempting to get the two economic development agencies to work better together, and to share in the goal of improving our economy. I spent a lot of time meeting with board members of both the Saratoga County Prosperity Partnership and SEDC, working with them to accomplish that goal. Small subcommittees of the groups also met together to discuss options for working cooperatively. I believe there will be a positive announcement soon from the groups as to the results of those efforts.

I continued to advocate for the needs of City and County residents at both the State and National levels as a member of the New York State Association of Counties, and the National Association of Counties. I serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Public Safety Committee at the State level, and in that capacity we work as a committee to make sure that the State addresses issues like mental health in Jails, using 911 funds that people pay on their cell phone bills appropriately, improving technology in the criminal courts, and addressing the shortage of emergency volunteers in more rural fire and ambulance departments. At the National level, I serve on the Community, Workforce, and Economic Development steering committee, where we advocate for things like continued funding for the CDBG program, better federal policies to more easily construct affordable housing, and looking at ways the workforce can be developed to meet the needs of modern business. I also serve on the International Economic Development Task Force, the IT Standing Committee, and the Arts & Culture Commission at the National Association. In early March, I will be traveling to Washington to have our annual meeting with our Federal representatives.

I also led and participated in a small working group that is looking at developing a County-wide bike route system. The County has over 800 miles of roads, and for those who ride, it would be beneficial to have these routes developed, both for those who are local and want to know the best County roads to ride on, but also for tourists who may be unfamiliar with where to go. These will not be separated bike paths, but signed routes, much like the State is doing with their NYS Bike routes. This group is also looking at the feasibility of constructing the Greenbelt trail on Crescent in the near future. Both Tina Carton, our Sustainability coordinator, and Commissioner Martin have been meeting with me on this working group. Supervisor Gaston has also been involved on the various emails and communications about this project.

**Looking forward to 2019, there is much to do.** This year I have been appointed by the County Chairman to serve as the Chair of the Buildings & Grounds committee. It is a committee assigned to oversee all county properties and facilities, and to work on any capital projects that we may have on tap for the year. With the Public Safety building already under construction, It will be my committee's job to ensure that the project comes in on time and under budget. Since the Public Health Department will be moving to the new building once it is completed, the Buildings & Grounds committee will be starting the preliminary planning surrounding the potential sale of the Woodlawn Avenue building here in the City. If you did not know, the Saratoga County Law Library, is being moved from City Hall to the County Court building #3. The Buildings & Grounds

committee will also be overseeing that construction project at the County complex in Ballston Spa. There are several other smaller projects that the committee will be looking at this year.

Other than that, the other goals I have for this year will be to continue working on the County Bike route system and to finalize the routes, and to seek County approval and implantation of the plan. The working group will keep meeting as we move forward. Additionally I will keep working in my roles at the State and National level to advocate for our City and County so we are properly and appropriately served by both our State and Federal representatives.

I also will be serving on the Racing & Gaming, Economic Development, Human Resources & Insurance, Trails, and Long Range Capital Planning committees at the County. I will again serve with the Mayor on the Saratoga Casino Hotel Foundation. I was just elected the Treasurer of the Saratoga County Capital Resource Corporation, and I will continue serving on the NYRA Local Advisory Board.

There is much to do, and I am looking forward to many accomplishments in 2019. I look forward to working with all the City Council members, as well as my fellow colleague, Supervisor Gaston, to continue to serve the residents of Saratoga Springs at the County level. Again, Mayor I thank you again for giving me some time at the State of the City to speak.

**COUNTY SUPERVISOR, TARA GASTON**

It's been an incredible first year on the Board of Supervisors, and I continue to be grateful for the honor of representing Saratoga Springs and for the help and support of Supervisor Veitch, the City Council, and the many, many residents who have shared both their concerns and their suggestions for how I could best represent my constituents and the County as a whole.

The first year of any elected office is often a time of settling in and developing "sea legs." While it was definitely a year of learning, 2018 was also a year of action. I sought to fulfill my promises to bring light on the work of the Board, by releasing public schedules of my meetings and distributing information about County functions and activities through Facebook, Twitter, email, and public forums - methods not fully utilized by the Board of Supervisors as a whole. I also pushed the Board to submit a resolution which will lead to Saratoga County's full representation on the Capital District Transportation Authority for the first time in many years. In addition, I received appointments to a number of state and national committees for veterans, mental health, public health, gaming, and being the only New York representative on the National Association of Counties committee for Energy, Environment, and Land Use. These committees allow me to share County challenges and achievements with other counties, obtain resources and information that can benefit Saratoga County, and influence state and local legislations, such as when I was able to develop language to advise New York State of local needs regarding election changes and during the transition to the legalization of adult-use marijuana.

In 2019, I look forward to another busy year. Within the next month I anticipate completion of my meetings with each of the County departments, which will allow me to maximize transparency, technology, and accountability of the Board, to the benefit of Saratoga Springs residents through improving access to County services and increasing efficiency while keeping costs down. In order to maintain City residents' access to needed services, I will be working with the Capital District Transportation Authority to review Saratoga County transportation opportunities, especially in light of the movement of public health, emergency services, probation, etc. to the new public safety building in Ballston Spa in early 2020. I will also continue my work to advocate for Saratoga Springs and Saratoga County on the state and national levels, with a focus on finding solutions for points of pain such as the opioid crisis, affordable and unstable housing, and the local costs of responding to climate change. Indeed, this week I am attending the New York State Association of Counties meeting in Albany, where I am advocating for the needs of the county by demanding the Governor include funding for early voting and e-pollbooks in his budget so that the costs of these much-needed but unexpectedly sudden voting reforms is not an undue burden on Saratoga County.

As always, I remain humbled by the trust of the residents of Saratoga Springs, and always appreciate receiving communications from residents to help me best represent them. Thank you, and I look forward to a productive and progressive 2019!

## **CLOSING**

In closing, I thank you for the opportunity to be your Mayor of Saratoga Springs. I am proud to serve this city, one of the best cities in New York State. Collectively, we have made adversity our friend, and I know that by continuing to work together, we will achieve the goals so important to our future. We have more to accomplish, and I look forward to doing so as your leader and public servant.

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