

**One City:
Built on Hope, Unity and Commitment**

By: Mayor Robert J. Duffy
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Strong Auditorium
University of Rochester

Good evening. Thank you President Seligman for your kind words. And thank you for the use of this wonderful facility. I am struck by the beauty of this place, the building and of the River Campus. We take so much for granted here in Rochester. I know many other Mayors who would love to have a beautiful and high-caliber institution like the U of R as part of their community.

In fact, the University of Rochester is now our number-one employer and one of the keys to our future. And President Seligman has been an outstanding partner and collaborator. Thank you for your help and support for this administration.

Thank you all for coming tonight for my first State of the City address. I'm excited to have this opportunity to tell you about what we have accomplished in our first 100 days of office. I owe much to so many for making these first 100 days so productive and such a great experience. I want to thank President Lois Giess and the rest of City Council for their leadership, support and collaboration.

Thank you to our elected officials, especially our hard working state Assembly and Senate delegation who represent the City. Members of the Assembly, the Dean of the Delegation David Gantt, Joseph Morelle, Susan John. On the Senate side, thank you to Senators Joe Robach, Jim Alesi.

Thank you to County Executive Maggie Brooks and the county legislature for your spirit of cooperation and community.

Let me also thank the Council of Governments – and all the Mayors and Supervisors of our towns and villages that make up greater Rochester.

Thanks to School Superintendent Manuel Rivera, School Board President Domingo Garcia and the rest of the school board for a promising start to an essential collaboration.

Our thanks to our hard working federal delegation. Senator Schumer, Senator Clinton and to Congresswoman Louise Slaughter.

And a special thanks to our city employees and to organized labor that represents them, especially Joe Montesano, Tony Gingello, Adam Urbanski and Dan Diclementi. City workers continue to amaze and impress me. They care deeply about what they do and about our city.

Personally, I need to say a special thanks to my wife Barb, my daughters Erin and Shannon, along with my mother, Catherine, and father, Neil – and as well as to Barb's parents Bill and Ginny Donahue. My family is a source of strength for me. Thank you for your support and for all you do for me.

I have one more thank you before I talk about the state of our city. That thank you goes to a man who has served our city and this community with honor, integrity and distinction. His vision of bringing City Hall and city services to the people is a vision I share and embrace and will continue to pursue. I would not be here today if it were not for the support and confidence from Mayor Johnson. Please join me in thanking the man I had the pleasure of serving as his Police Chief for seven years: Mayor Bill Johnson.

Unfortunately, Mayor Johnson is out of town tonight due to a long standing commitment but he is here in spirit.

Today is the 100th day of my administration. I have so much to share with you about what we have done these past 100 days and what we plan to do the next 100 days.

First I'd like to emphatically state that while I stand up here alone and report our progress to you, I am by no means alone helping to create change and progress for our city. Simply put, I have an outstanding team around me. A team of professionals, presidents, CEOs, Vice Presidents and directors. I have a team of women and men – that with due respect to all past administrations – I think is the finest senior management team ever assembled in Rochester city government.

This staff that has committed itself to help us grow and improve our city. They work incredible hours, not because I ask them to, but because that's just who they are. You'll see their cars in the parking lot and the lights burning in their offices early in the morning, late at night and on weekends.

Many of them work for less than the private sector would pay. Some don't even have to work. To a person, they are here because they are all committed to Rochester, and to make city government work to improve the lives of our residents. Their spirit of public service to our city makes me proud to have them all on our team. It is my honor to work with them and to be a part of such a great team.

I am also honored to serve as the city's number one cheerleader. After 100 days as Mayor, I am more confident than ever about our future. But to achieve our city's great potential, we must confront some cold, hard facts. So first I have to declare this:

There are two cities of Rochester today. Both with very different looks, very different realities and very different opportunities for the people that live there. One city is prospering and vibrant, the other poor and struggling. One city sparkles with quality housing, strong neighborhoods, jobs and access to a rich cultural life. The other city battles poverty, violence and drug dealing on the very blocks they call home. One city has safe streets, parks to enjoy and homes that increase in value. The other city sees violence and crime almost daily and may be living next to or near a boarded up house.

The one city is symbolized by the Park Avenue area, the East End, Browncroft or Highland, exciting neighborhoods where families and residents occupy wonderful homes, spacious yards on beautiful streets. Businesses, restaurants, and the bustle that makes urban life so appealing are evident. The other city lives on streets most of us have never spent any time on. Streets like Sullivan Street, Reed Park and Mark Street, in the so called "Crescent" area.

Blocks infected by crime and poverty in which too many homeowners walk away from properties and leave them for us to board up, foreclose and eventually demolish. Streets where a third of the homes are dangerously vacant, boarded up and frequently broken into or used for drug dealing or other illegal activity.

Yet on these very same streets – littered with vacant properties, some burned out, some littered with needles and drug paraphernalia – also stand beautiful, well kept homes with manicured lawns, flower boxes and families struggling for a better life.

Families that go to work everyday, often holding down two or three jobs to keep their home and their hope for a better life for their children.

As a police officer and your Police Chief, I walked these streets, visited these homes and have seen the spirit and determination of those who live there.

On these streets where many adults would fear to walk, children play every day.

I show you these images behind me not to demonize our great city. I do so to show our strength and our resolve to improve and to change.

It is for these families, these homeowners, these children, these fellow citizens, these brothers and sisters, we must have one city, one Rochester.

One city. One Rochester.

One city where our assets and resources are connected to our greatest needs. One city where every child has hope. Hope for a good education, a good job and a chance to own a home. One city where every man, woman and child can live without fear of violence and crime. One city where empty homes are not boarded up, but getting prepared for a new family to move in.

One city, built on hope, unity and commitment.

We cannot solve our problems unless we first acknowledge them. We must not be afraid to talk about our challenges. Along with confronting some harsh images, we must address some statistics about our city that are painful to recite. I have shared these before at citizens meetings, in boardrooms and in Albany. I'll state them once again tonight.

Our beautiful, beloved city, Rochester, New York, leads the state in areas we never thought possible. We are number one in per capita homicides, number one in drop out rates, number one in child poverty rates, number one in jobs lost and last in job growth, number one in housing foreclosures.

We are the only upstate city not to emerge from the recession with growth. We lag behind Buffalo, Syracuse and even Binghamton.

These are not the categories in which we want to lead the state. This is not our tradition and I stand before you today to say, this will not be our future.

So what has to be done?

When I was elected Mayor, I said we need to have one city, one Rochester, built on hope, unity and commitment. To do that, we will focus on three things, public safety, education and economic development. And we will concentrate on those three areas and drive real, demonstrable change with an underlying commitment to outstanding customer service.

Public safety, education and economic development.

A business cannot be successful if young people are outside selling drugs. If those children were in school and saw education as a way to get a job and make a future, they would not be dealing drugs. And every child who loses their life to violence rips apart a family, creates fear for those who live and work in that area and dissuades others from moving in or starting a business.

Public safety, education and economic development are joined together and we must address all three concurrently.

Crime ruins the lives of too many victims: businesses which leave or choose not to come here; families that are ripped apart by violence; and the most tragic of all, the children whose lives are lost and with them the hope and promise of the next generation.

The senseless loss of life has to stop now. My heart goes out to the family of Herschel Scriven. He was the young minister shot to death backing out of a driveway of a friend. He just happened to drive into the path of some young men looking to commit a robbery. He was a young man of such promise, innocence and filled with the love of life and his fellow man. He was gunned down by a group of young men who showed no regard for precious life. The killers have been caught, but that won't bring Herschel back.

Those killers were arrested because the community came forward and worked with the police. The police had no suspects. They needed the community's help. Our community heard and cooperated and the arrests were made. This cannot be the exception to the rule. This must be the rule. Public Safety is everyone's responsibility.

I need your help. Every parent, citizen, homeowner, business owner and minister. I need your help. The police need your help. Your neighbors and even your family need your help.

If you see a crime in progress, call 9-1-1. If you have evidence that would help the police solve a crime, call 9-1-1 or Crimestoppers at 423-9300.

If you know someone carrying an illegal gun, tell us. Help us identify them. We will root them out and stop this violence. Help us save lives.

If we are not together, we are alone. Let's stop the violence. This community has had enough. I have had enough this senseless violence has to end. We have all had enough, and as a community we can stop it!

I took office on January one of this year. At that time I laid out a series of promises that we would meet in our first 100 days in office. Those promises fell into the impact areas of public safety, education and economic development with an underlying commitment to outstanding customer service.

It has been a busy and productive 100 days and I'd like to tell you how these promises and goals have been met.

In our daily 8:15 AM senior management team meetings, those goals were present on two large boards to be checked off when accomplished. I'm pleased to report that those goals have either been accomplished or are far enough along to deserve a check mark along side them. The complete list is available on the City Website and in the companion books distributed to each of you tonight.

I am proud to tell you that in the last 100 days we have accomplished the following: Under public safety, we promised to begin the tough work of making our streets safe, without apology. That means bolstering our ranks in the police force and making our police more visible and present in downtown and in our neighborhoods. It means protecting our citizens and protecting our businesses. And we are keeping our promise. Some highlights of the last 100 days:

We hired a new Police Chief and today is his first day on the job. Chief David Moore, please stand and be recognized. Welcome to Rochester.

We reduced the time it takes from taking a police exam to being hired on the force. That was a process that took from 18 months to almost two years. We cut that down to seven months! We will have two academy classes this year. That means more officers ready to protect our city.

We created a more visible police presence by putting more police foot patrols downtown and in our neighborhoods. I want more officers and I want those officers in uniform and walking beats. Permanent walking beats!

In the impact area of education, we promised to find real ways to help the School District keep children in school and to graduate. We said we would convene the partners necessary to help the district combat illiteracy. Here's what we have done in the last 100 days.

We put teeth into an anti-truancy program. Working with the School District, the Rochester Police Department, Youth and Teen-Court and Pathways to Peace, we began a two phase truancy program.

We're finding children who are not in school, who are truant, and taking them back to school. In phase two, we will be taking these truant children to centers operated by the City School District, where the underlying causes for their truancy will be addressed.

Far too often, children have skipped school because they could. That is now changed. Children have to know that if they decide to play hooky, there will be consequences. So far, we have rounded up about a dozen children and returned them to our schools.

We have created a literacy campaign with city employees leading the way. It's a group coming up with concrete ways to improve adult and childhood literacy.

Staying in school must have a reward, and that means a job. We have created a program called The Summer of Opportunity. I have mailed out letters to more than 500 city employers asking them for one, two, ten or however many jobs they can find to give to young city residents this summer.

We will take kids off of our streets this summer and put them to work.

Which brings us to economic development, we promised to reform our methods and practices and create an activist, aggressive and business friendly economic development department.

In my first week in office, I had to make a tough call. The community was divided on how to handle the fast ferry, many wanted to give the vessel another year. But the more I looked at the numbers, the clearer the choice became. We simply could not risk losing millions more of tax dollars on the ferry. That's money we need for public safety, jobs and education. We cut our losses on the Fast Ferry and now we are very close to selling the ship and paying down our \$45 million debt. It was a tough call, but it was the right decision, and I appreciate the support you have shown me since that decision.

We hired a new Commissioner of Economic Development who really understands the meaning of customer service, Carlos Carballada. Carlos has also served as the president of three banks and as Chancellor of the State Board of Regents. He begins his new job on April 26th.

As promised, we created a one-stop-shop for economic development. Now there will be just one point of contact for those starting or expanding a business in our city.

And we created a special fund to catch up with the backlog of 450 homes that need to be demolished, not only to remove the blight, but to pave the way for future development. These decrepit houses are now being demolished.

We are attacking our problems as aggressively as possible and with a sense of urgency.

We sought to promote the arts and cultural activities as economic engines. We are doing just that. We will continue to have a Music Fest this year but with a big difference. We will no longer employ an out of town promoter and instead we will work with WDKX to promote the Music Fest.

We will, where we can, keep our money with local businesses. We are also working with a local promoter to bring in musical acts and other activities to keep Rochester Rocking this summer on our streets as well as our entertainment venues.

We will also increase our aid to the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra by \$25,000 this year, helping to keep the RPO on solid financial footing.

Bolstering all of the above efforts is our laser-like focus on outstanding customer service.

In our first 100 days we established *Rochester by the Numbers*, a system of assigning performance targets to City departments and providing service to external customers. We're doing in City Hall what is done everyday in the private sector. You're given measures and targets based on strategic goals for which you are held accountable. Over the next few weeks, each city department will be getting targets and measures. And each department will be held accountable for meeting them.

We promised to establish monthly meetings with citizens. And we have with *City Hall on the Road* and the *Mayor's Night In*. These meetings are well attended and often last three or more hours. Every city department head is on hand to answer questions and to solve problems.

We set out to create a communitywide effort on volunteerism and community engagement. And we are. It's called the Mayor's Office of Volunteerism and Engagement or the MOVE Center. It's collaboration with St. John Fisher College and President Don Bain. The MOVE Center's location will be in the City of Rochester but we are seeking volunteers from the entire area. The goal is to create a sustainable volunteerism effort in our community.

Since January 1, 2006, 200 volunteers have committed their time and talents to the City of Rochester's departments' initiatives, totaling 726 hours.

Finally, this week, we will be announcing Rochester's Clean Sweep: Showing Pride in our City.

Working with citizens and residents, we will be picking up bulk items, knocking down unsafe structures, hauling away old tires and debris, painting over graffiti, fixing sidewalks, repairing potholes and cleaning up right-of-ways in every corner of our City.

Our Clean Sweep effort has also drawn the support of the community. Tom Golisano has committed his financial support to this effort, as has John Riedman and Susan Holliday of the Riedman Foundation along with several area banks - Citizens, Key Bank, Bank of America and M & T.

We are going to literally clean up our city and restore pride in Rochester, one street and one neighborhood at a time.

That was our first 100 days. It is a start and already we are starting to see results. Our city is poised for growth.

Ten days ago, Delphi recommitted to our area. Rochester is one of a handful of Delphi locations that will still exist. Our city and county joined to create financial incentives to keep Delphi and its 1,675 precious jobs here.

Five days ago, a new business at High Falls opened. Saddle Ridge will mean 120 new jobs in our city.

Four days ago, Gleason works committed to invest \$18 million in its Rochester facility. Thanks to outstanding cooperation of the state, county, City and the private sector.

That was the last ten days, and tonight, I have more good news for our city.

Thanks to the efforts of the City's Economic Development Department, Rochester will be the new corporate headquarters of Nu-kote Incorporated.

Nu-kote is the foremost developer of high quality and environmentally friendly imaging supply products for thousands of imaging machines, including ink jet printers, laser printers, copiers, fax machines and much more. Nu-kote employs approximately 3,000 people worldwide; with 275 of those jobs currently in Rochester. Nu kote's CEO – Ron Baiocchi says The company anticipates adding between 100 and 150 new jobs in Rochester in the next 12 months - with the majority of the new hires in manufacturing. Rochester will be Nu-kote's corporate headquarters; its worldwide engineering and R&D center of excellence; and its primary manufacturing location within the United States. The company currently has its headquarters in Tennessee. And Dallas wanted the company there. But Nu kote is coming here to Rochester, within our great city. Mr. Baiocchi is in the audience tonight. Please join me in welcoming Ron Baiocchi and Rochester's newest Corporate Headquarters, Nu-kote!

The arrival of new businesses to Rochester is a good example of how this administration should be judged on our progress.

It's not about charts, graphs, and reports. It's about results. Plain and simple, results you can see and feel.

I want each and every city resident or customer to be able to walk outside their home, office or business and see results. See and feel a difference.

Maybe it's cleaner streets, fewer boarded up homes, fewer children on street corners, fewer empty storefronts, faster service, new families moving in your neighborhoods, more jobs, new developments, new businesses, more kids working, more restaurants, clubs and night life. Maybe it's just a buzz in the air.

These are tangible results, and this is how this administration will be judged and how I will judge my performance and that of my team.

We are not afraid of such a standard. I am not afraid of it because I can feel the change all around us.

I stand before you today to tell you we are at the tipping point in Rochester. The tipping point towards a bright future for our city.

Positive forces are aligning with us. Much like the pieces of a puzzle all beginning to come together.

The critical ingredients for success are falling into place.

Governments are coming together, business and labor are forging new bonds, elected officials are combining their influence, suburbs and towns are reaching out, universities are collaborating and the faith community is unifying.

The force of all this unity, combined with the hope of our citizens and the commitment of our institutions makes anything possible. Anything.

It is our time. I can feel it, sense it, see it, hear it and we must step up now to seize our destiny.

It is our time. Rochester's time. The Flower City will blossom again.

We are at our tipping point and we are going to tip in the right direction.

This feeling I have comes from our people. I can feel their hope. I can feel their desire for a better life for their families and for their home and that home is Rochester.

I feel their excitement! I love this city. You love this city. Together we are going to make it great again.

I don't downplay our difficulties and challenges. They are many and serious. And I have shared their uncomfortable images with you tonight

But I plan to tell the whole story. The other side of our many difficulties is our many assets and our public spirit.

It is time we all focus on the positives, on the glass being more than half full.

We are our own worst enemy at times. How often do we stop and think about all this community has to offer, all the things that companies like Nu-kote seek to find in a headquarters.

I often talk to people who are transferred here and never want to leave. They're the ones who tell me all the great things this community provides.

Now is the time to shed the negatives of the past. Political differences, city/suburb differences, city/county, all of it. It's time to come together and create greatness.

I want everyone to be proud of the name Rochester!

Hope, unity and commitment. When all three come together and when we come together, anything is possible.

I've seen it work and so have you. It worked these last 100 days.

With the problems our city faces, and looking at an historical lack of parity in state aid to cities, this community unified with hope and commitment and changed our situation. The Rochester Fair Share Coalition was convened by the Rochester Business Alliance under the leadership of Sandy Parker. It brought together an historic collaboration of business, labor, governments, the

faith community, health care, education and community organizations. Together we took the message to Albany that Rochester needed help and we needed our fair share of state funds. The result was the highest increase in state aid in our city's history and the largest single increase to any city in the state. Our residents needed hope for a better future, and the community unified and committed its resources and efforts to make it happen. And it did.

This model is just the beginning of what we as one community can accomplish with unity of voice and purpose. This is how we can reinvent our future.

Our people want this kind of government cooperation and unity. People want results. So do I. So do we.

I have reported tonight on the results of our first 100 days. Now let me tell you something about our next 100 days. Once again, our focus is on public safety, education and economic development, all bolstered by exceptional customer service.

In the coming days we will present a complete list of goals for our next 100 days. Let me give you some highlights tonight.

To enhance our community's public safety, we will focus our energy, our resources and our efforts to save lives. Five years ago this community reeled in disgust at the death of Tyshaun Caldwell, a beautiful and innocent child caught in the crossfire of a senseless shooting.

Five years later, Herschel Scriven is gunned down. We haven't learned to stop this plague of violence and murder.

I love and respect our Constitution, but I will not apologize for keeping our streets safe and we will use every legal means to achieve this.

Our police will be on permanent walking beats whenever possible. Our police will be out of their cars and on the streets, working along side neighbors and residents.

But our police will also be on the streets questioning, challenging and arresting.

The focus is protecting life, protecting our homes and businesses.

Yes we need our children better educated, we're working on that.

Yes we need jobs for our young people, we're working on that. But job-one now is to keep our city, our businesses and our citizens safe.

To do that I will strongly consider an 11 p.m. - to - 6 a.m. curfew for youths 16 and under during the months of June, July and August. It will be a curfew that can be cost-effectively implemented and enforced.

I will wait for recommendations from our delegation of Police, Pathways to Peace and City Council. Later this month this group will travel to Minneapolis where they will study that city's comprehensive curfew.

We must not shy away from any legal action that can save lives and keep our City safe.

Earlier, I asked you to be the eyes and ears of city government to help combat violence. In the next 100 days, that will be the job of every City employee as well.

We are all responsible for public safety. In the next 100 days, we will increase the 24/7 street visibility of City staff.

You will see not just our police and fire more present, but every department of the city that has a vehicle.

It's every city employee's job to participate in public safety by being vigilant and communicating with our police and other agencies when needed.

I promise you will see an increase in foot and bike patrols Downtown and in our neighborhoods, to increase actual and perceived levels of safety.

In the next 100 days - To improve our children's education, we will kick off a community-wide campaign to increase literacy of at-risk students and their families. We will improve the current anti-truancy program within City School District so we see an increase in student attendance in April, May and June. We will partner with the Hillside Work Scholarship Connection Program to let truants know there is a reason to stay in school.

We will use the already established Superintendent's Leadership Council, to focus all constituencies on strategies that improve attendance, literacy, health, student behavior and graduation rates. Our first meeting was just last week.

We are bringing community leaders together to support education with specific deliverables.

To spur more economic development, we will implement revised policies related to lead paint inspection and with Certificate of Use and code enforcement. We are going to make sure the city rules and processes are part of the solution and not unintentionally causing harm to business and property owners.

We are going to aggressively pursue new businesses and innovation.

We will focus economic development efforts on retention and growth of businesses currently located in the City. We are going to create confidence in our city. Confidence to bring a business here and confidence to buy a home and live here.

We will go beyond our aggressive empty home demolition schedule and, in partnership with businesses, banks and developers, continue to design strategies to dramatically increase investment in City property.

We will make the dream of owning a home a reality for many shut out of that dream.

We will partner with our businesses and our colleges and universities to put first-time homeowners and families into homes that are currently vacant.

We will also explore every way possible to use our city initiatives like demolition of vacant structures to provide jobs for our people, particularly in the “Crescent” area and the areas blighted by those vacant structures.

We will exhaust every avenue to put our people to work. And that work will be all the more meaningful when it is helping to rebuild the very streets and neighborhoods where they live.

And finally to continue our quest for unparalleled customer service, we will report to the community on the first phase of our *Rochester by the Numbers* priority measures, focused on improving response times and levels of customer satisfaction.

We will design and begin to implement our 311/One Call to City Hall system. With one call, citizens can have any question answered, whether it’s a question about an assessment, permit, license, refuse pick up or any other question pertaining to city government.

These next 100 days will continue our quest to make this city first in providing for the safety of its people, first in real education and opportunities for its children, and first for those choosing to locate, retain or expand their businesses.

Finally, I pledge to work with the county and towns to get funding under the state's Shared Services fund. It’s a special fund to encourage municipalities to work together on collaborative projects such as the construction of a new crime lab.

I also propose we work together to seek that state Shared Services money to re-open Durand Eastman Beach for our residents.

Times have been tough. Our city is struggling. You know it and I know it.

Think of this community like a proud old boxer in the ring. We’ve taken some hits: a hard economy, fiscal setbacks and job loss. We have been hit hard and often and we may have taken a knee.

But, we are getting up and we are going to fight for our future and keep fighting until the day is ours.

Ask yourselves, “What can I do to be part of the solution?” “Can I volunteer?” “Can I provide a job?” “Can I reach out to a young person at risk?” “How can I help?” Ask these questions and then call our volunteer line at 428-6230.

Remember who we are.

We are one city. We are Rochester. We are going to fight.
We are one city. We are Rochester.

We treasure the legacy of the leaders that made Rochester a great City in the last two centuries. Douglass, Anthony, Eastman, Carlson, Bausch and Strong.

The list is long of men and women who built this community from Nathaniel Rochester's sleepy

mill town to a hot-running engine of American manufacturing, a beacon of business innovation and social tolerance.

The factories are smaller today, but we have no shortage of innovation and leadership. Golisano, Wegman, Mulcahy, Chesonis, Perez, Zarrella, Summers, Seligman, Simone, Futerman, Kessler, Catherine Carlson, and more.

We are the home of giants in arts and culture. Garth Fagan, Albert Paley, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Taye Diggs, Jeff Tyzik, Teddy Geiger and our newest national sensation J-Mac!

Our assets are many and we will build on them. Rochester will no longer lead the state in every negative measure we mentioned earlier.

We will once again be at the top of lists for quality of life, job growth, population growth, educational excellence and safe streets.

We will once again be the community of choice for people to live and businesses to thrive. We will once again take our rightful place as the jewel of upstate New York.

Yes, this is our time - the time for Rochester to reinvent ourselves and our future.

If we believe it, we will speak it. If we speak it, we will do it. If we do it, we will accomplish it.

One city. One Rochester. Making our city a great place to live, work and raise a family is all of our responsibility. This is journey of a thousand steps and in the past 100 days we've started this journey together. The way we will succeed is one step at a time. We will save one life at a time. Create one job at a time. Graduate one student at a time. We will clean up our city one street at a time. One great city, on the rise again. Our best days are ahead of us.

Welcome to the rising - and may God bless you all.