

# ***Transcript of the 2015 State of the City Address***

***Delivered by Mayor Warren on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015 at Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School, Mayor Warren's alma mater, and introduced by former Wilson Principal Suzanne Johnston***

Thank you, Principal Johnston, for that humbling introduction. And thank you Principal Mehta and the wonderful Wilson students who have joined us.

And I want to thank all of you for your warm welcome and joining me here on a cold winter night.

I would like to particularly acknowledge the Rochester Police Honor Guard. The professionalism and dedication of our police force is exemplified by this unit. Please join me in applauding these fine officers and the entire [Rochester Police Department](#).

I am grateful these officers could join us.

I am also very troubled and saddened that a member of this department, [Rochester Police Officer Daryl Pierson](#), cannot.

Daryl's wife Amy Pierson joins us tonight. Amy thank you for being here and God bless you and your family.

As I begin my formal introductions, let me start with Police Chief Ciminelli, Locust Club President Mike Mazzeo and the Rochester Police Command Staff and officers. Thank you for your dedication, service and sacrifice.

Speaking of dedication, service and sacrifice, it is my honor to recognize the [Rochester Fire Department](#), Chief Schreiber, Command Staff and Firefighters.

I would ask if you could please hold your applause until the end of my introductions of our other dignitaries.

I'd like to recognize the members of [Rochester City Council](#), led by President Loretta Scott. All of the things you will hear in tonight's speech would not have been attainable without their support.

Welcome to former Mayor Bill Johnson, former Mayor, former Lt. Governor and now President of the RBA Bob Duffy, judges from the Seventh Judicial District, the Dean of our State Delegation Assemblyman David Gantt, Majority Leader Joe Morelle, Assemblyman Bronson, Senator Funke, County Executive Maggie Brooks; our County Clerk Cheryl Dinolfo, District Attorney Sandra Doorley, members of the County Legislature, Superintendent Vargas, School Board President Van White and members of the Board of Education. Thank you for coming.

And of course, I would not be here tonight without all of the wonderful City employees and the members of my Senior Management Team – led by Deputy Mayor Len Redon.

I want to recognize my family, the McClarys. And in particular, my cousins Second Lieutenant Caleb McClary who serves in the United States Air Force and Army Specialist David McClary who just finished serving a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

And let's take a moment to remember all of the men and women who serve in our armed forces.

Now last, but most certainly not least, I want to recognize my inspiration for seeking this office and tirelessly working on behalf of our city – my husband Tim and my daughter Taylor.

Taylor's future and the future of every other bright and talented child in every corner of our city is what truly motivates me.

It is for that reason tonight - it is particularly humbling to stand before you here in my alma mater, Wilson High School, both as the former "girl from the neighborhood" and now as the woman who is Mayor.

[Joseph C. Wilson Magnet High School](#) helped prepare that "girl from the neighborhood" to go to college, law school and eventually to hold the highest elected office in our city.

Principal Johnston will tell you that my years here at Wilson were not always the best. Especially my first year.

But my own tenacity and my will to persevere and my drive to dispel the myths about who I was, who I could be or what I could accomplish, kept me going throughout those high school years. And, it is what keeps me going today.

I am grateful for the Wilson experience.

However, knowing what I know and seeing what I see on a daily basis in our city, this very experience is part of my greatest concern.

I am concerned that too many "girls and boys from the neighborhood" are leaving our schools unprepared for college, jobs or careers.

And that is why we are here in my old high school. A place that I love.

I chose to talk to you here today because this school and its walls represent everything we were, everything we are and everything we as a community have the potential to be.

Our city is struggling. We are third in the nation for [childhood poverty](#), we have highly concentrated pockets of unemployment and we are trying to find our way back to a time of prominence.

And some may say that our future does not seem bright. But to me, our best days are ahead.

When I first took office a year ago shootings had been up 25 percent. People in the neighborhoods felt like they had been abandoned for Downtown development. Inner city families had lost hope. The state and federal government did not see Rochester as a place to invest in, nor pay attention to.

In actuality we were trudging along, City Hall was paying its bills on time and otherwise surviving. But there was no vision, no expectation of making Rochester a better place for all of its citizens.

We need to be a place that retains our young professionals, that embraces our elderly, a place that educates our children, that revitalizes our neighborhoods and a place that holds people accountable for

the crimes they commit.

And to create that place, we have to think innovatively and I'm proud to say that we are on the right path.

## **We have to work together**

I use the word "WE" quite a bit.

That is not by accident, because I cannot effect the change we need to make in our great city alone.

We need to bring more jobs to this city. We need to make our neighborhoods and streets safer and We need to make our schools perform better.

More Jobs. Safer Streets. Better Schools.

This was my mission on City Council, it was my mission during the campaign and now it is my mission as Mayor.

As I've mentioned, our city ranks third in the nation when it comes to childhood poverty rates, which is particularly unacceptable to me as a mother.

This pervasive poverty is easy to miss, because it's concentrated in parts of our city many pass over on their drive to work.

But please believe me, I know it's there and it's something we must address if we want to get stronger as a whole.

Far too many families living in poverty, especially single parents, face so many barriers when they try to get ahead.

Barriers that we, as a community, can remove if we work together and start looking at solutions that move our families out of the cycle of poverty and into self-sustainability.

All it takes is one job. Just one person to break the cycle of poverty, and it can uplift an entire family, and last for generations.

I know this to be true because it happened to my family and many other families that raised their children here in the 1960s and 70s.

We're taking steps to address this on the local level, to provide for more jobs, safer neighborhoods and a quality education for all of our residents

But City Hall cannot do it alone, WE have to work together.

We are seeing our city neighborhoods being transformed and we are making it happen by working together.

Partnership allowed us to transform the Mt. Hope corridor and create [College Town](#) but it was bi-

partisanship that brought us [CityGate](#).

Costello and Son's CityGate, when completed, will be the southern gateway to the city. with retail space, 300 residential units on the Erie Canal, and a 150-room hotel. And if you haven't seen, the Costco sign has gone up. So it is not a dream, it is a reality.

This is a \$200 million project. It will create more than 1,000 permanent jobs, 1,500 construction jobs, \$28 million in annual sales tax revenue and \$27.5 million in property tax revenue over 20 years.

Shortly after I became Mayor, [County Executive Brooks](#) called me and said CityGate was in trouble and so were the jobs that went with it.

A critical vote to move the Costco project forward was in jeopardy and the Republican County Executive was asking the Democratic Mayor for help.

Delivering more jobs in this community cannot be about politics or partisanship. Plain and simple, it's about: "The People we all represent."

So I worked with the County Minority leadership – specifically Legislators Lightfoot and Andrews – and we agreed that party politics and political gamesmanship had no place in the fight for jobs and we got it done together.

The County and City in an unprecedented spirit of cooperation this past year settled disputes regarding unarraigned prisoners, saving city taxpayers \$800,000. We have settled disputes regarding our 911 reimbursements and are working together at a level reminiscent of the Morin/Ryan Era.

A City and County working together is how to get things done!

And we will continue to work together for the benefit of our taxpayers, because it is the only way to govern effectively.

## **Transformation Projects**

And since we are focused on jobs, I am excited that after meeting personally with the Army Corps of Engineers in Washington, D.C. to make the case for essential dredging at the [Port of Rochester](#), we received \$2.2 million.

I want to thank our Congressional Representatives in both the House and Senate for helping secure this money.

This means one of the City's signature transformation projects will move forward to enhance the recreational nature of the Port and create more exciting opportunities for jobs.

Our Downtown welcomed a [new state-of-the-art bus station](#) in November, opening the opportunity to revitalize Main Street.

And, we are excited that after 35 years we finally broke ground on a new and improved [regional transportation center](#).

This center will be utilized not only by Amtrak, but also by Greyhound, Trailways, local taxis, RTS, hotel shuttles, car rental agencies, pedestrians and bicyclists.

We can't talk about our Center City without talking about our Main Street. [The Sibley Building](#) will house an expanded 24-hour police substation, 150 to 200 senior and market rate housing units and office space with street-level retail shops and restaurants.

So make no mistake and let there be no doubt, revitalizing our Main Street is a very real and important job-creating objective and it is one that is already well underway.

And I am excited to report that the [Tower at Midtown](#) is moving ahead. I want to thank Buckingham Properties and Morgan Management for continuing Larry Glazer's vision.

I was also honored to join City Council in naming one of the new streets at this site after [Andrew Langston](#), the founder of WDKX.

New lofts and apartments are opening up all over Center City, and if you hadn't heard; after 10 years we finally have a full service grocery store located in Downtown Rochester.

[Hart's Local Grocers](#) opened its doors this past August.

We are thankful to Glenn Kellogg, the founder and President of Hart's Local Grocers for investing in our city and employing 66 of our neighbors.

These are all great and positive stories. But nonetheless, one of my hardest jobs this past year was helping people understand why Rochester's best days are ahead. Even some governmental entities were skeptical about Rochester's future.

They thought that manufacturing in Rochester was long past its time. But we proved them wrong.

After a visit to the White House, I learned about the President's [Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership](#). When I came home to Rochester, I told our team we need to get designated as a global manufacturing hub.

I'm proud that the Rochester region was named one of only 12 in America to receive this designation, giving us access to up to \$1.3 billion in federal assistance.

The IMCP will focus on jobs in Precision Manufacturing, Photonics and Optics. To date our regional partners have been able to receive \$5.5 million because of this designation.

And we are not just thinking regionally or nationally for that matter. We are thinking globally and going after international companies.

This past summer our volunteer professor in residence, Professor Thang, visited China to promote our manufacturing abilities.

In the recent State of the Union Address, President Obama said that international companies are looking to move their businesses to the United States. We want the world to know, that they are welcome in the City of Rochester.

To that end, we are working to promote Governor Cuomo's [Global New York campaign](#), and we are hopeful that Rochester will be designated as the global center for photonics which will propel our region even higher and ultimately bring more jobs.

Let's take a look at why Rochester is the ideal place for global manufacturing.

*(Break for video)*

That video was produced by [CGI Communications](#) – a firm that is adding vitality to the heart of our Downtown and providing jobs for our residents.

## **Jobs and Innovation**

I firmly believe that to be successful in the fight for jobs, we need to be creative, flexible and open to trying new things. And that's why we created the [Office of Innovation and Strategic Initiatives](#). This team of uniquely skilled professionals will research and develop bold new solutions to Rochester's most pressing social and economic challenges.

Rochester's Office of Innovation is investigating the potential to leverage existing fiber-optics infrastructure in Downtown Rochester as a tool for business attraction and development.

Ultra high-speed internet would be a key amenity to attract businesses to our new [Downtown Innovation Zone](#).

Our city is crisscrossed by an extensive network of fiber-optic infrastructure built over decades by Monroe County, the City of Rochester, and private telecommunications partners.

I recently spoke with County Executive Brooks about establishing a group from the public and private sectors to investigate how the City and County can best use this resource to create jobs.

And I recently announced that [Bloomberg Philanthropies](#) awarded the Office of Innovation a \$1.9 million grant, and will bring their technical experts to help us explore new and more innovative approaches to some of our most pressing challenges.

One of the team's first tasks will be to work to further develop the Market Driven Community Co-ops based on the [Cleveland Evergreen Cooperatives](#) model.

In Rochester, our co-ops will be located in distressed neighborhoods and employ neighborhood residents using a proven model that we know works.

The best way to move children out of poverty is to ensure that they have access to a quality education and that their parents have access to sustainable, living wage jobs.

And, that is why I am excited to work in partnership with Majority Leader Morelle, County Executive Brooks, Peter Carpino and our other community partners on the Rochester Anti-Poverty Task Force.

This new initiative announced by Governor Cuomo will be the catalyst for the institutional change we need in our community.

The time for more studies and committees is over. We must get to work implementing the structural changes needed to create a real Stairway out of Poverty.

And that is why this year I will seek to connect our [Operation Transformation Rochester](#) program with the [RochesterWorks](#) Finger Lakes Hired Initiative, where we will address our skills gap by providing in-demand training to people in our most challenged neighborhoods.

Our support of special events such as [public festivals and our commitment to the arts](#) plays a vital role in creating jobs as well.

The [Rochester Jazz Festival](#) alone brings a conservative estimate of \$12 million to our city's economy.

## **Safer Neighborhoods**

Beyond working to bring more jobs to our city, we are fighting every day to make sure Rochester's streets and neighborhoods are safer.

It is my sincere belief that the life and breath of any city is in its neighborhoods.

This past year, we renewed our focus by working hand in hand with our Police Department and community to solve our city's murders.

I am happy to report that our murder clearance rate is almost double the national average and the highest it has been in recent years.

We are thankful to the community for their cooperation but we are most thankful to the men and women in our police investigative units for leaving no stone unturned in bringing criminals to justice.

Our efforts at creating safer neighborhoods can best be seen by looking at the numbers, and the numbers I am referring to are the most recent crime stats, which I am unveiling here, tonight.

And the facts speak for themselves:

We have the lowest Violent Crime levels in 10 years and the 2nd lowest in 25 years.

- Part 1 Crime (which is how the FBI labels major crimes) is at its lowest level in 25 years.
- We have fewer than 11,000 Part 1 Crimes for the first time in 25 years.
- There has not been a single year from 1985 to 2012 when Part 1 numbers dropped below 12,000 and we are actually below 11,000.
- Robbery and Aggravated Assault are at 25-year lows, with robbery down over 20% from 2013.
- Property Crime -- Burglary and Larceny -- are all at their lowest rates in 25 years.

I am proud of these numbers. Aren't all of you proud of these numbers too?

We deserve to be proud of these numbers. We deserve to take heart that crime and violence have been significantly reduced in our city.

When I chose Mike Ciminelli to be Rochester's Police Chief we made each other a promise.

That commitment was that Mike would work every day to build up the morale in the department, to give our officers the support they needed and to work on always building a stronger relationship with the community.

In turn, I would provide him and the men and women who serve under him with the resources they needed to effectively and safely do their jobs.

We agreed to hold each other accountable and work together to make our neighborhoods safer, and we did.

But good numbers should not sugar coat the fact that there is still too much crime happening in our city. And I stand firm when I say to you that I will work tirelessly to make these numbers better. Because I choose not to accept any more children dying in our streets. And I do not ever want to attend another funeral for a fallen officer in our city.

In this effort to fight crime and make neighborhoods safer, we are pushing forward with an ambitious, five-section community-based [Police Reorganization Plan](#). This data-driven plan returns officers to the neighborhoods so they can better engage in true community policing.

And our re-engagement with the community doesn't end there. Another progressive way we can create safer neighborhoods is by engaging our faith community with our police officers through our [Clergy on Patrol](#) and our [Books and Bears](#) programs.

With Clergy on Patrol, officers get a chance to walk neighborhoods with clergy and members of the community to build relationships.

The Books and Bears initiative that started with the Browncroft Community Church and the Rochester Police Foundation gives officers children's books and teddy bears to carry in their patrol cars so that when they encounter children who have gone through a traumatic experience, they can offer them one of these items to comfort them.

Our efforts for safer streets and more vibrant neighborhoods don't stop at innovative community-policing programs. It also encompasses diversifying the Rochester Police and Fire Departments.

Tonight, I'm proud to say that because of my leadership as past President of City Council and now as Mayor, the most recent recruit classes have been the most diverse ever -- more than half of the most recent graduates of the RPD and RFD academies have been women and minorities.

To that end, I want to introduce Deputy Fire Chief Felipe Hernandez, Jr.

Chief, thank you for being here and I couldn't be more proud as Mayor to have promoted you because you are such a talented leader within the Rochester Fire Department.

I'm also proud to have made you the first Hispanic Deputy Chief in our Fire Department's History.

And our students are starting to look at public safety jobs as possible careers through our Career Pathways to Public Safety program.



And while I am talking about our Fire Department, I want to mention that this past year, we returned to providing fire safety training to our community.

It is important that we explain to our young people the dangers of playing with fire and the damage it can cause. [Firefighters dedicated to the purpose of fire education](#) are again visiting our schools and positively connecting with our children for the first time since 2009.

It is also important to let our seniors know about fire safety and how to protect themselves -- especially those living in high rises.

We believe that prevention education for our citizens not only helps prevent fires but also saves lives and this type of proactive community outreach is worth funding.

Our children and residents are connecting with our Firefighters in a positive way and its building important relationships.

Even cats love our Fire Department.

## **Neighborhood Investment**

Beyond public safety we are investing in our neighborhoods in other ways.

Neighborhoods must be places where people want to live and raise their families -- confident that their children can reach their full potential.

That is why we are investing millions of dollars in neighborhoods across every quadrant of our city.

And we are helping people become homeowners.

In 2013, the City assisted 135 families in our homeownership programs.

But, in 2014, we more than doubled that number and helped more than 390 families become first time home owners. This is a testament to our community's belief that our city's best days are ahead and we will keep this momentum going.

We completed the [Flats at Brooks Landing](#) this year, bringing more student housing to this area and further expanding the footprint of the University of Rochester west of the Genesee River.

And I'm happy to report -- after many years of delay -- we have secured a \$284,000 state grant to begin revitalizing the Bulls Head neighborhood.

The DePaul Agency recently completed the [Carriage Factory Apartments](#) in the Susan B. Anthony Neighborhood.

We broke ground on Stadium Estates in the JOSANA Neighborhood, with 45 affordable units that will transition to affordable homeownership.

The 45 units are located on 28 previously vacant lots.

We were just awarded a \$40,000 grant from the [US Conference of Mayors and Scotts Miracle-Gro](#) to build a new agriculture training and farming center.

We have many community gardens throughout our city.

Through this program we will provide fresh fruits and vegetables to area residents, we will also be able to train them in best practices and entrepreneurship.

In the spring, we will start a [\\$7.2 million renovation of the Public Market](#).

This past December, City Council approved the [Marketview Heights Urban Renewal Plan](#), which calls for adding more than 100 units of new housing, re-habilitating several deteriorated houses, converting vacant lots into attractive side yards and renovating the Eastman Dental Dispensary.

With the help of leaders like Nelson Leenhouts, the Center City Corridor, or C3 Partnership, we will transform East Main Street from Goodman Street to Culver Road.

It has drawn in national representatives like Warren Buffett and his Purpose Built Communities partnership.

This past year we finally started to [fill in the Inner Loop](#). And I am proud that this administration was able to save city taxpayers money by securing the \$4 million needed for the Inner Loop from the State of New York.

I want to thank our Federal and State delegations for their help in securing this money, especially Governor Cuomo and our two transportation chairs – Assemblyman Gantt and Senator Robach.

When I focus on more jobs, safer streets, and better schools, I don't want to lose sight of the fact that these areas are so very, very interrelated.

More jobs will bring safer and more vibrant neighborhoods and help drive better results in our schools and vice versa.

## **Better Schools, an Educated Workforce**

So the last piece of the puzzle is the drive for better schools and a better educated workforce.

First, the [3-to-3 Initiative](#) was created to give every 3-year old in the city of Rochester the academic skills necessary to succeed in school.

We also want parents to know that they are their children's first teacher. So I joined forces with School Board President White and other local experts to launch the "five key things parents can do", to give their children a fighting chance at life.

This booklet is available to parents at hospitals, daycare centers, recreation centers and libraries.

I want to thank the members of the [Mayor's Early Learning Council](#) for developing these recommendations.

I was also excited to hear Governor Cuomo announce that he believes that 3- and 4-year-olds need to be in high quality educational programs.

Besides developing programs, it is my belief that you must also be visible in young people's lives.

That is why I launched "Lunch with the Mayor" – where we visit schools to have lunch with our students and answer any questions they may have. It's designed to show that I care about them and I believe in them.

We also need to invest in our youth more strategically. For years, Rochester has been reducing programming and made recreation centers only about play.

To be competitive in the global marketplace we need to do better and we need to invest in preparing our children for their futures.

This past year we increased funding not only in our [Recreation Department](#) but also to our [libraries](#).

We invested in infrastructure, painted, purchased books, provided for more educational experiences and met with our recreation teen leaders because if you say you care about the children of your city you have to show it.

Our recreation centers are not just about basketball games anymore.

In the coming year we will look to provide more strategic educational programming focused on literacy, science, arts and math.

Our libraries are providing literacy support in the home – a service we will expand to include more households with a recently secured grant.

When you have a Mayor who is a mother, providing educational opportunities is a priority.

Instituting a state of the art [City Hall internship program](#) was particularly important to this Mayor, because I would not be where I am today had it not been for an internship I received while in college.

That internship was transformative and ultimately equipped me to finish college and opened the door to law school.

It is imperative that we allow our college students the opportunity to serve civically, to earn money and gain work experience.

Last year in our pilot program we had over 100 participants from more than 19 colleges and universities.

This year, we already have over 200 applications.

These students will work in various departments and gain a wealth of knowledge that they will use for the rest of their lives.

It has often been said: "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

Through Operation Transformation Rochester (OTR) we are trying to successfully teach youth and adults to “fish” by offering five comprehensive programs geared towards education, vocation and employment.

These programs work together and are designed to be adaptable to an individual’s skill level, background and needs.

Beyond these efforts to create more jobs, safer streets and better schools we are working to transform City Hall through competent management, new revenue generation and more responsive government because we believe we can do both.

I am proud to be the first Mayor in 19 years to successfully negotiate and sign a contract agreement with the Rochester Police Department. I am proud that we worked with the Police Union and Chief to ratify and sign a contract.

Starting with an announcement tomorrow, Rochester will embark on a Single Stream Recycling Pilot Program. This pilot is the starting point from which we will go to full city-wide single-stream recycling. We are creating a cleaner, greener city.

This past year, we were -- for the first time in many years -- awarded \$6 million in unrestricted aid from the State of New York and I am thankful to our State leaders for their help in securing those dollars.

And our [Law Department](#) was able to negotiate and settle a longstanding cable franchise fee dispute with Time Warner Cable for \$1.3 million.

In fact, we have a renewed focus in going after taxpayer dollars instead of allowing these funds to remain uncollected.

Seems simple, right?

If the City is owed money, we should collect it. I don’t know why we weren’t doing this before, but I can tell you we are doing it now.

While campaigning for office I often heard city residents talk about not having direct access to the Mayor's Office.

So one of the first orders of business when I took office was to institute the Mayor’s Office of Constituent Services.

To date, this Office has serviced more than 20,000 calls, received over 1,100 pieces of correspondence, attended 700 community meetings, and welcomed residents to the Mayor’s Office. This office is located right next to mine.

I see our [Constituent Services](#) staff every day and when you call they tell me your issues of concern or your praises for the work our City workers are doing.

I am proud of all of our City employees, but at this time I want to recognize a few who went above and beyond the call of duty.

When our neighbors in Buffalo took a pounding from Mother Nature earlier this winter they asked for help. And we sent a large force from our [Department of Environmental Services](#) to give them a helping hand.

The Mayor of Buffalo called me and told me that our crews' expertise and equipment were invaluable.

I met our crews when they completed their mission and arrived back home, and tonight I'd like to thank them again for their service. You did Rochester proud and you do Rochester proud every day.

I also want to recognize Officer Michael DiPaola who apprehended the suspect who has been charged with killing Officer Daryl Pierson. Officer DiPaola, because of your work, justice will be served for Daryl, his family, the RPD and everyone in this city.

And I want to single out yet another dedicated Rochester employee, Jeff Leusch, this time from [9-1-1](#), who talked one of our residents through child birth over the phone.

Unbelievable, right? And Mom and baby and are doing just fine. Jeff was one of 14 employees at 911 who helped mothers deliver babies over the phone in the last year. They're members of what we like to call the "Stork Club."

Way to go Jeff and how about a round of applause for John Merklinger and our first-rate 9-1-1 staff.

We have taken on so much in our first year at City Hall and all of the efforts I have outlined here tonight, combined with hard work and a dedication to the people we serve, are making a difference.

In 2015, we are continuing with our mission to transform this city.

The reorganization of the Rochester Police Department will redefine policing in our city.

The Market Driven Community Co-ops will take a proven model and deliver jobs and opportunities for our residents.

The Office of Innovation will help us to apply 21st century solutions to age-old problems and revitalize our city.

The bold effort to turn our collective fiber optic resources buried under ground will help us create real jobs at street level.

The Single Stream Recycling program will make Rochester a cleaner, greener city.

This is not just window dressing. Combined, these efforts will deliver 1,000 jobs for 1,000 city residents during my first term as Mayor.

## **Fly, Run, Walk, Crawl**

When I started writing this speech, I began by reflecting on the past year's accomplishments to create jobs; build safer neighborhoods and to improve education.

My reflection on these goals and accomplishments drew me to the words of Bobby Kennedy, when he said: *“There are those who look at things the way they are, and ask why. I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?”*

As a City, we need to take up that challenge and ask Bobby Kennedy’s direct and pointed question.

Why can’t we create more Jobs? Why can’t we achieve safer streets and why can’t we improve our schools? My answer is -- there is no reason why we cannot.

Rochester has been a haven for the poor and new immigrants for over two centuries.

Our settlement houses, churches, charities and well meaning citizens moved immigrant populations from poverty to prosperity throughout our city’s history.

Many of our city’s poor today are stuck in a cycle of poverty that has spanned generations. This cycle has to be broken. And our historical success tells me that it most definitely can be.

I am a product of this city and I can assure you I didn’t grow up in an affluent neighborhood. I know poverty and I know what it means for people to be poor.

I know their plight and their thirst for jobs, safe streets and good schools. It’s not something I am just talking about. I get it.

I ran to be their champion, to make a difference, to ask “why not?” and to find a way to make Rochester a city that can move residents living in poverty toward prosperity.

Dr. Martin Luther King once said: *“If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.”*

The task of bringing more jobs, safer streets and better schools to every corner of this city will not be easy.

It will not be accomplished overnight. Some days we will fly. Some days we will run. Some days we will walk. And, yes, some days we will crawl.

With all of you here tonight as my witness, the one thing this Mayor will never do is allow us to stop moving forward.

God bless you all. Have a good night.

View on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr-4Af7ELsg&feature=youtu.be>