

MAYOR TOM HENRY'S 2020 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

THANK YOU, IRIC, FOR THAT WARM INTRODUCTION.

I APPRECIATE AND RESPECT YOUR OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP IN OVERSEEING FORT WAYNE UNITED AND THE TENPOINT COALITION.

THANK YOU FOR BEING SOMEONE WHO TRULY CARES ABOUT FORT WAYNE.

FAMILY, FRIENDS, ELECTED OFFICIALS, SPECIAL GUESTS, RESIDENTS OF FORT WAYNE, WELCOME.

I'D LIKE TO THANK EACH OF YOU FOR TRUSTING ME AND MY STAFF.

AND I'M GRATEFUL THAT YOU'VE GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE TO SERVE AS YOUR MAYOR.

IT'S A PRIVILEGE AND AN HONOR – ONE WHICH I DON'T TAKE LIGHTLY.

NOW IS THE TIME TO MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER TO CONTINUE THE MOMENTUM AND EXCITEMENT WE'RE EXPERIENCING IN OUR GREAT CITY.

CERTAINLY, WE'VE COME A LONG WAY.

WE'RE NOW KNOWN AS BEING ONE OF THE BEST-RUN CITIES IN THE COUNTRY, THE LOWEST COST OF LIVING CITY, A TOP-10 REAL ESTATE MARKET, AND A LEADING CITY WHERE MILLENNIALS ARE BUYING HOMES.

THIS NATIONAL RECOGNITION SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT FORT WAYNE.

WE HAVE SO MUCH TO OFFER AND CELEBRATE.

IN FACT, IN THE LAST DECADE, FORT WAYNE HAS SEEN THE TYPE OF TRANSFORMATION THAT HAS MADE US THE ENVY OF OTHERS ACROSS THE MIDWEST AND ENTIRE COUNTRY FOR THAT MATTER.

IT STARTS IN OUR THRIVING, VIBRANT DOWNTOWN THAT JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER.

I KNOW I'LL NEVER FORGET HOW WE CAME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY TO CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF PROMENADE PARK.

AS THE FIRST PHASE OF RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT, OUR NEWEST PARK IS WELCOMING AND ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES.

AND, IT HAS CERTAINLY MADE OUR THREE RIVERS INTO A REGIONAL

DESTINATION FOR RECREATION, ARTS, AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

THE OPENING OF PROMENADE PARK THOUGH WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE MANY VOLUNTEERS AND OUR PARKS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENTS.

IN PARTICULAR, MEGAN BUTLER, WHO SERVES AS THE PROGRAM AND EVENTS MANAGER AT PROMENADE PARK.

SHE'S A DEDICATED EMPLOYEE COMMITTED TO MAKING THE PARK THE VERY BEST FOR ALL OF YOU.

MEGAN IS WITH US TODAY.

MEGAN, PLEASE STAND SO WE CAN THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO.

THE PUBLIC'S ONGOING SUPPORT AND INTEREST IN OUR RIVERFRONT EXTENDS TO PHASES TWO AND THREE AS WELL.

WE'RE GOING TO BE ADDRESSING LAND USE AND ZONING, CONNECTIVITY, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND FLOOD CONTROL.

AND, WE COULD SEE CONSTRUCTION STARTING IN THE NEXT 12 TO 18 MONTHS.

IN ADDITION, TWO MAJOR PROJECTS BY DEVELOPERS BARRETT & STOKELY WILL BEGIN THIS YEAR ALONG THE RIVERFRONT FOOTPRINT.

THEIR FIRST INITIATIVE IS "THE RIVERFRONT AT PROMENADE PARK."

IT'S MORE THAN A 75-MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT THAT WILL FEATURE APARTMENTS, OFFICES, HOSPITALITY, RETAIL SPACE, AND PARKING.

THE OTHER ENDEAVOR IS "THE LOFTS AT HEADWATERS PARK," WHICH IS A NEARLY 68-MILLION DOLLAR DEVELOPMENT NEXT TO CLUB SODA THAT WILL ALSO HAVE APARTMENTS, RETAIL SPACE, AND PARKING.

REX BARRETT WITH BARRETT & STOKELY IS WITH US TODAY.

REX, WOULD YOU PLEASE STAND TO BE RECOGNIZED.

I APPRECIATE THE COMMITMENT THAT BARRETT & STOKELY IS DEMONSTRATING BY BEING PART OF MAJOR INITIATIVES THAT WILL HAVE A LASTING AND MEANINGFUL IMPACT.

ALSO, NEAR THE RIVERFRONT IS ONE OF MY FAVORITES PROJECTS – THE LANDING.

THIS 32-MILLION DOLLAR MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT INCLUDES THE HISTORIC RENOVATION OF SEVEN BUILDINGS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ONE.

LAST YEAR, WE CELEBRATED THE COMPLETION OF THE STREETScape INVESTMENT AND NOW A NUMBER OF RESIDENTS HAVE ALREADY MOVED INTO APARTMENTS LOCATED THERE.

THIS SPRING, THE REMAINING COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL SPACES WILL OPEN.

OUR DOWNTOWN IS ALSO SEEING THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW 124-ROOM BOUTIQUE HOTEL AT THE CORNER OF MAIN AND HARRISON STREETS.

IT'S SCHEDULED TO OPEN IN EARLY 2021 AND IS A CLEAR INDICATION OF THE GROWTH AND POPULARITY OF OUR DOWNTOWN.

OF COURSE WE ALREADY HAVE A NUMBER OF NEW HOTEL ROOMS AVAILABLE WITH THE RECENT OPENING OF THE HAMPTON INN AND SUITES NEXT TO PARKVIEW FIELD.

THE 136-ROOM HOTEL IS HAVING A POSITIVE EFFECT AS WE ACCOMMODATE EVEN MORE VISITORS AND CONVENTIONS.

IN FACT, OUR PARTNERS AT VISIT FORT WAYNE TELL US WE WELCOME SIX-AND-A-HALF MILLION GUESTS EACH YEAR, RESULTING IN OVER 700-MILLION DOLLARS THAT GOES INTO OUR LOCAL ECONOMY.

THERE'S NO QUESTION THE VISITOR INDUSTRY IS A KEY FACTOR IN OUR COMMUNITY'S SUCCESS.

ECONOMICALLY SPEAKING, OUR ONGOING PARTNERSHIP WITH GREATER FORT WAYNE INC. CONTINUES TO HELP US ATTRACT AND RETAIN COMPANIES AND EMPLOYEES.

AND, THE STRONG ECONOMY WE ENJOY HAS CERTAINLY ENHANCED OUR POSITION AS A POINT OF DESTINATION CITY FOR JOB AND BUSINESS GROWTH.

IN FACT, IN FORT WAYNE LAST YEAR, WE SAW 650 NEW JOBS CREATED, 28-MILLION DOLLARS IN NEW PAYROLL, AND A TOTAL PRIVATE INVESTMENT OF 61-MILLION DOLLARS.

SOME OF THESE INVESTMENTS INCLUDE TRI-CORE LOGIC, FRANKE PLATING, ACCUTECH MOLD AND MACHINE, BROTHERHOOD MUTUAL, AND ACCUGEAR.

DOING ALL WE CAN IN THE AREA OF JOB CREATION HAS ALSO LED TO A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH EASTERSEALS ARC.

THIS INITIATIVE IS FOCUSING ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT, SKILLS TRAINING, AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

EASTERSEALS WILL ALSO FOSTER EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS THROUGH A VARIETY OF MEANS INCLUDING NEW LEARNING LABS.

IT'S TRULY ABOUT BECOMING A STRONGER AND MORE INCLUSIVE CITY WITH PEOPLE READY AND WILLING TO WORK.

FORT WAYNE IS BECOMING A HUB FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP TOO.

OUR SUMMIT CITY ENTREPRENEUR AND ENTERPRISE DISTRICT IS RAMPING UP OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE COURAGEOUS INDIVIDUALS CONSIDERING STARTING THEIR OWN COMPANY.

AND, I'M PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGED THAT WE'RE PUTTING AN EMPHASIS ON ASSISTING MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES.

YOU KNOW, PARTICIPATING IN A SHARED VISION AND HAVING A DESIRE FOR FORT WAYNE TO CONTINUE ITS MOMENTUM ARE SENTIMENTS SHARED BY MANY LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY.

A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THIS TYPE OF COMMITMENT TO OUR FUTURE IS RUOFF MORTGAGE.

THEIR OWNER HAS INFORMED US THAT THEY ARE GOING TO MAKE DOWNTOWN FORT WAYNE THE HOME FOR THEIR NATIONAL CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS.

LOCATED AT THE CORNER OF JEFFERSON BOULEVARD AND EWING STREET, THIS

43.5-MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT WILL INCLUDE OFFICE AND RETAIL SPACE AND A PARKING GARAGE.

MARK MUSIC, OWNER AND CEO OF RUOFF MORTGAGE HAS JOINED US TODAY.

MARK, PLEASE STAND SO WE CAN RECOGNIZE YOU.

INCIDENTALLY, FORT WAYNE IS MARK'S HOMETOWN, AND UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP, RUOFF HAS GROWN FROM 18 EMPLOYEES TO ABOUT 700. THE COMPANY ALSO EXPANDED FROM ONE LOCATION IN FORT WAYNE TO OVER 65 RETAIL LENDING OFFICES IN FIVE STATES AND THEIR CONSUMER DIRECT PLATFORM COVERS 40 ADDITIONAL STATES.

AS THE HEART OF OUR CITY CONTINUES TO BE REVITALIZED, WE MUST ALSO INVEST IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL VIABILITY OF THE BACKBONE OF OUR COMMUNITY, OUR NEIGHBORHOODS.

I'M ENCOURAGED THAT WE'RE UPDATING THE SOUTHEAST FORT WAYNE STRATEGY.

THIS NEW DOCUMENT WILL FOCUS ON THREE DISTRICTS FOR REINVESTMENT.

THE FIRST IS SOUTHTOWN WHERE WE WILL WORK TO GROW RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT DENSITY.

SECOND IS THE AREA OF MCKINNIE AND ANTHONY TO CREATE AN ACTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER BY OFFERING PROGRAMMING FOCUSED ON FOOD AND ART.

AND THE THIRD WILL BE THE PONTIAC AND WEISSER PARK AREA TO IMPROVE THE CORRIDOR FOR WALKABILITY AND CREATE A HUB OF RETAIL ACTIVITY.

I'M ALSO OPTIMISTIC THAT WE'RE GOING TO BE ABLE TO MAKE ELECTRIC WORKS A REALITY.

THE LOCAL PUBLIC FUNDING PARTNERS REMAIN COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH RTM VENTURES TO SEE THE PROJECT HAPPEN AND SUCCEED WHILE BEING GOOD STEWARDS OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS.

I KNOW THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM IS CONTINUING EFFORTS TO FINALIZE PRIVATE FINANCING AND SECURE TENANTS.

LARGE PROJECTS ARE COMPLEX AND TIME CONSUMING BUT ARE IMPORTANT TO HELP ENSURE LOCAL AND REGIONAL SUCCESS.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER ALSO MEANS THAT WE'RE FOCUSED ON ESSENTIAL SERVICES THAT RESIDENTS, NEIGHBORHOODS, AND BUSINESSES EXPECT AND DESERVE.

PUBLIC SAFETY IS AT THE TOP OF THE LIST.

IT HAS BEEN SINCE I BECAME MAYOR AND IT WILL CONTINUE TO BE.

WE'RE NOT WITHOUT OUR CHALLENGES, BUT WE'RE ADDRESSING ISSUES HEAD-ON AND WILL CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES WITH A FULL COMPLEMENT OF 480 OFFICERS.

VIOLENT CRIME WAS DOWN FIVE PERCENT IN 2019.

AND, HOMICIDES DROPPED BY NEARLY 37 PERCENT.

WE'RE GETTING DRUGS AND ILLEGAL GUNS OFF THE STREETS IN RECORD NUMBERS.

AND THIS YEAR, WE'LL HAVE ANOTHER RECRUIT CLASS, A CONTINUATION OF JOINT ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS, AND NEW EQUIPMENT FOR THE VICE AND NARCOTICS DIVISION.

THE WORK BEING DONE BY THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE FORT WAYNE POLICE DEPARTMENT IS EXCEPTIONAL AND COMMENDABLE.

PUBLIC SAFETY IS A TEAM EFFORT THOUGH, AND THE FORT WAYNE FIRE DEPARTMENT IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THAT TEAM.

WE'RE ADDING NEW FIREFIGHTERS EACH YEAR AS WE RESPOND TO INCREASING NUMBERS OF CALLS FOR SERVICE TO ASSIST THOSE IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.

IN FACT, THERE WERE 25-THOUSAND CALLS IN 2019 ALONE.

OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT'S TRAINING PROTOCOLS, USE OF THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY, PUBLIC OUTREACH, AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS ARE SECOND TO NONE.

IN 2020, THERE WILL BE CONTINUED CONSTRUCTION OF A LIVE-BURN TRAINING CENTER AND MORE FIREFIGHTERS WILL BE CERTIFIED IN ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT.

I'M ALSO PROUD THAT POLICE AND FIRE PERSONNEL COLLABORATE WITH OUR NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED FORT WAYNE UNITED AND TENPOINT COALITION EFFORTS.

REACHING YOUNG MEN AND BOYS OF COLOR THROUGH INNOVATIVE AND PRACTICAL WAYS DEMONSTRATES THAT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES MATTER.

ASSISTANCE IN CHARACTER BUILDING, IMPROVING SELF-ESTEEM, EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AND OVERALL PRIDE ARE KEYS TO SUCCESS.

AND WE WANT EVERYONE WHO CALLS FORT WAYNE HOME TO SUCCEED.

LINE OF COMMUNICATION ARE OPENING, TRUST IS BEING BUILT AND LIVES ARE BEING CHANGED FOR THE BETTER.

A COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES EXTENDS TO ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL AS WELL.

THIS DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO BREAK RECORDS FOR ANIMAL ADOPTIONS, AND THEIR WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY IS OUTSTANDING.

AND, WITH AN EXPANDED SURGERY AND MEDICAL AREA, THEY'RE ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE LIFE-SAVING MEDICAL CARE THAN EVER BEFORE.

ANOTHER KEY FACTOR IN MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IS HOW OUR CITY'S INFRASTRUCTURE IS PERFORMING.

SINCE 2014, WE'VE INVESTED 180-MILLION DOLLARS IN NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS TO STREETS, ROADS, SIDEWALKS, CURBS, ALLEYS, AND BRIDGES.

AND, A RECORD 33-MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF ENHANCEMENTS WILL TAKE PLACE THIS YEAR AS WE REACH EVERY QUADRANT OF THE CITY.

WORK ON GOSHEN ROAD AND STATE BOULEVARD WILL CONTINUE.

ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS ALONG MAPLECREST ROAD AND THE TANBARK TRAIL AND ASPEN VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOODS WILL ALSO BE SEEN.

WE'RE ALSO INVESTING MORE THAN 100-MILLION DOLLARS IN 2020 TO ENSURE WE HAVE RELIABLE AND AFFORDABLE WATER, SEWER AND STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE.

WE'LL BE WORKING ALONG HESSEN CASSEL ROAD AND TAYLOR STREET AND THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF FRANCES SLOCUM, WILDWOOD PARK AND PARKERDALE TO NAME A FEW.

AND, MAMAJO, OUR TUNNEL BORING MACHINE, WILL CONTINUE HER JOURNEY DIGGING THE DEEP ROCK TUNNEL AS PART OF THE LARGEST CLEAN WATER INITIATIVE IN OUR CITY'S HISTORY.

IN FACT, WE'VE PASSED THE ONE-MILE MARK OF CONSTRUCTION.

WHEN COMPLETED IN A FEW YEARS, THE TUNNEL WILL HAVE THE CAPABILITIES TO TAKE A BILLION GALLONS OF COMBINED SEWAGE TO THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND OUT OF OUR RIVERS.

THAT'S AN ACCOMPLISHMENT WE ALL CAN BE PROUD OF.

I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANY QUESTION WE ENJOY AN EXCELLENT QUALITY OF LIFE IN FORT WAYNE AS WELL.

AND THAT'S DUE IN LARGE PART TO OUR PARK SYSTEM.

WE COMPLETED MORE THAN 70 PROJECTS IN 2019.

ONE OF THE REALLY COOL ONES WAS THE CONNECTOR THAT LINKS THE CONSERVATORY TO THE EMBASSY THEATRE, GRAND WAYNE CENTER, FORT WAYNE HILTON AND OTHER DOWNTOWN DESTINATIONS.

AND, THIS YEAR, WE'VE COMMITTED 3-MILLION DOLLARS FOR SEVERAL ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS.

THAT LIST INCLUDES FOSTER PARK PAVILION NUMBER THREE, A CONSERVATORY SCULPTURE INSTALLATION, ADDITIONAL RIVERFRONT PROGRAMMING, AND THE PARTNER OFFICER PROGRAM.

THE QUALITY OF THE PEOPLE IN FORT WAYNE IS EQUALLY AS IMPORTANT AS OUR QUALITY OF PLACE.

WHEN FORT WAYNE HOSTED THE 2019 REGIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK CONFERENCE, CITIZENS PAT TURNER AND DAY MORGAN STEPPED UP TO RECRUIT MORE THAN 60 VOLUNTEERS TO MAKE THE EVENT A SUCCESS.

VISITORS FROM THE FIVE STATE REGION COMMENTED THAT THEY THOUGHT IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST AND MOST ENGAGING CONFERENCES THEY HAD EVER ATTENDED.

PAT AND DAY ARE IN THE AUDIENCE.

I WANT TO HAVE BOTH OF THEM STAND AT THIS TIME SO WE CAN SAY THANK YOU AND JOB WELL DONE.

THIS YEAR, OUR NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS WILL ALSO FEATURE PROJECTS THAT WILL HAPPEN AS A RESULT OF 2-MILLION DOLLARS BEING DISTRIBUTED TO THE FOUR AREA PARTNERSHIPS.

I ENCOURAGE OUR NEIGHBORS TO BE CREATIVE AND IMAGINATIVE WHEN DETERMINING THE PROJECTS FOR THE "INVESTING IN NEIGHBORHOODS NOW" PROGRAM.

IN FORT WAYNE, WE CARE DEEPLY ABOUT OUR CHILDREN TOO.

THROUGH OUR OFFICE OF HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES, A LEAD PAINT REMEDIATION PROGRAM IS UNDERWAY.

APPROXIMATELY 180 HOMES WILL HAVE LEAD PAINT CHALLENGES ADDRESSED AS WE WORK TO KEEP KIDS HEALTHY AND SAFE FROM THE DANGERS OF LEAD POISONING.

FORT WAYNE ALSO PRIDES ITSELF AS A DIVERSE COMMUNITY, AND AS A RESULT, WE MADE HISTORY THIS YEAR WITH OUR NEW CITY COUNCIL.

WE'RE NOW HONORED TO HAVE THE FIRST TWO AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN TO SERVE ON CITY COUNCIL.

I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE ENTIRE COUNCIL THOUGH AS WE HAVE A SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A LASTING AND MEANINGFUL IMPACT.

FRIENDS, WE DID WELL IN 2019, BUT IN 2020 AND BEYOND, I WANT US TO DO MORE THAN JUST THE TRADITIONAL PROJECTS THAT WE'VE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO.

CERTAINLY, THOSE EFFORTS WILL CONTINUE, BUT IT'S TIME TO REACH BEYOND OUR COMFORT ZONE.

FIRST, LET'S COMMIT OURSELVES TO MAKING FORT WAYNE A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY.

INFANT MORTALITY, TOBACCO USE, TYPE 2 DIABETES, AND DRUG ADDICTION ARE SOME OF THE ISSUES WE MUST ADDRESS.

SOON, I'LL BE CONVENING THE LEADERS OF OUR MAJOR HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS, OTHER HEALTH PROVIDERS, AND SELECTED AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO EXAMINE THESE CHALLENGES AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF OUR COMMUNITY.

THIS WILL REQUIRE OUR COLLECTIVE TIME, TALENT AND TREASURE, BUT IT'S WORTH IT.

SECOND, I KNOW MANY OF YOU TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR TRAILS SYSTEM FOR EXERCISE, RECREATION, ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION, AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY.

MY COMMITMENT TO OUR TRAILS CONTINUES TO BE UNWAVERING.

IN FACT, THIS YEAR, WE HAVE PLANS FOR TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ON DUPONT, SAINT JOE CENTER, WHEELOCK, ARDMORE, AND MEMORIAL PARK.

BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF 2023, WE HAVE PLANS TO ADD 16 MILES TO OUR 120-MILE SYSTEM.

ACTUALLY, MY ULTIMATE VISION IS TO SEE THE COMPLETION OF THE 81-MILE POKA-BACHE TRAIL CONNECTION FROM POKAGON STATE PARK IN ANGOLA TO WABASH STATE PARK IN BLUFFTON.

IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN A DECADE TO COMPLETE, BUT WE'LL BE ABLE TO USE AND ENJOY EACH SEGMENT WHILE WE ANTICIPATE THE FINAL, SPECTACULAR TRAIL.

THIRD, I BELIEVE PROGRESSIVE CITIES NEED TO REDUCE THEIR DEPENDENCY ON FOSSIL FUELS.

WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION AND BEYOND.

SO, THIS YEAR, WE WILL EVALUATE SOLAR ENERGY OPTIONS ON ALL GOVERNMENT-OWNED BUILDINGS.

OUR BELIEF IS SOLAR ENERGY IS NON-POLLUTING, RENEWABLE AND EFFICIENT.

ADDITIONALLY, WE HAVE A RESOURCE RECOVERY PROGRAM AT OUR WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT.

WE'RE CONVERTING ORGANIC WASTE TO METHANE TO POWER OUR BUILDINGS AND HAVE SEEN SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS OF NEARLY TWO-MILLION DOLLARS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS.

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE TO DO MORE WITH RENEWABLE ENERGY AND SAVE MONEY FOR TAXPAYERS AND WE WILL.

FINALLY, WE MUST CONTINUE TO INVEST IN THE ARTS COMMUNITY.

WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE AND APPRECIATE HOW THE ARTS HELP US EXPRESS OUR VALUES AND BUILD BRIDGES BETWEEN CULTURES.

I KNOW I'M MORE ENCOURAGED THAN EVER BY THE WORK OF THE PUBLIC ART COMMISSION AND THE RECENT COMPLETION OF THE PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN.

THE PROPOSED PROJECTS OFFER A VARIETY OF IDEAS NOT ONLY FOR THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ART BUT WHERE TO LOCATE THEM.

WITH THAT IN MIND, I ALSO SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ARTS CAMPUS IN DOWNTOWN FORT WAYNE WHERE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS CAN EXPERIENCE A VARIETY OF OFFERINGS IN A CENTRAL LOCATION.

IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE A TRUE MAGNET FOR FORT WAYNE AND NORTHEAST INDIANA.

BEING LEADERS AND DEVELOPING NEW IDEAS ISN'T EASY, BUT IT'S NECESSARY TO ENSURE FORT WAYNE IS ALL THAT IT CAN BE.

LET'S CONTINUE TO BE A GAME CHANGER IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND QUALITY OF PLACE.

THERE'S NO QUESTION, FORT WAYNE IS EXPERIENCING UNPRECEDENTED MOMENTUM.

WE'VE BECOME A CITY THAT'S CONFIDENT IN ITSELF AS WE ANTICIPATE A BRIGHT FUTURE.

BY MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER, WE CAN REACH BEYOND OURSELVES TO BE BOLD AND NOT AFRAID TO TRY NEW THINGS.

TOGETHER, LET'S DIG IN AND MAKE FORT WAYNE MORE THAN ANYONE THINKS IS POSSIBLE.

I CAN SAY WITH CERTAINTY THAT THE STATE OF OUR CITY IS AS STRONG AS IT'S EVER BEEN.

NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO STOP.

WE HAVE MUCH MORE TO ACCOMPLISH.

AFTER ALL, WE ARE FORT WAYNE, A CITY LIKE NO OTHER.

GOD BLESS YOU AND GOD BLESS THE CITY OF FORT WAYNE.

THANK YOU.