STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS
TROY, MICHIGAN
MAYOR ETHAN BAKER
WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025 AT 6:00PM

Thank you, Tara, for your always warm and enthusiastic introduction! Each year we partner with you and the Troy Chamber for this annual event, and as this is our 5th State of the City collaboration, it seems that you, Cindy, and I understand the rhythm and arc of this process! And it IS a process! For whatever reason, I have heard from you – many times this year – something along the lines of: "Don't stress; you ALWAYS feel like this at this point…" It's strangely calming, and I really do appreciate your continued dedication, not just to THIS event, but to all you do here in Troy. I view you and the Troy Chamber team as an important arm of the City and I know you always put Troy's best interests out front. Many of you are here tonight because of your relationship with the Troy Chamber. Chamber Board Members, Ambassadors, and valued members—you all know the level of service and care you get with our Troy Chamber—what I frequently call the BEST chamber in Metro Detroit, if not the state! I've said it many times—the City's partnership with the Troy Chamber of Commerce is something I am extremely proud of, and you and your team continue to go above and beyond for Troy's business community… and we, as a City, are grateful! And you would be the first to say it is NOT just you, but the Troy Chamber TEAM. So, Sheila, Evan, Bella, and their newest addition, Amalia, please stand up and let us thank you! [APPLAUSE].

I want to wholeheartedly thank Jen Peters, who started off this evening's event with a great history lesson! In fact, because of Jen's good work

sharing the background of this beautiful and historical place, MY speech will be a little shorter tonight! … … So, Jen, the 200 people right here also thank you! --- In all honesty, I am beyond grateful for the collaboration between the City and the Village that you spoke about so perfectly. The Troy Historic Village is one of Troy's many gems and I've seen firsthand your leadership and dedication to the Village and to the City of Troy's history. Admittedly, choosing this location for the State of the City came a little bit later than usual, but as we approach the City's 70th birthday, have honest conversations about our city buildings and infrastructure, and look toward Troy's future, this truly is the PERFECT place to host tonight's event.

So thank you, Jen, and thank you to the Troy Historical Society board members and the Village team members! [APPLAUSE]

This evening's colors were presented by our Troy Police Department Honor Guard. Their continued reverence in what THEY do has certainly added an important touch to this evening, and we thank you! [APPLAUSE]

And I'm so thankful that Athens Sophomore Quin VanAmberg agreed to sing our National Anthem this evening. Thank you, Quin—you nailed it and have made your school, City, and country proud! [APPLAUSE]

Our Police Chaplain, Pastor Bob Cornwall, always seems to know just the right thing to say during an Invocation and we thank and applaud YOU, Bob, for your genuine and warm care for our City! We are so fortunate to have your service to us! [APPLAUSE]

I am a sucker for orchestral music, and the beautiful sounds being played by Troy Metro Symphony Orchestra's Brass Quintet while you arrived were even better than I envisioned. To the quintet, thank you for sharing your beautiful gift of music with us! [APPLAUSE]

They will be playing during the afterglow as well, and I'm looking forward to it! And a special Thank You to Hemanth Tadepalli for your role in having the quintet here! [APPLAUSE]

As Jen mentioned, I DO love shout outs, and there will be more throughout the evening… but for now, let's get started with the State of our City 2025!

[CUE INTRO VIDEO]
[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

Where Everybody Knows Your Name…I can imagine if this village were an ACTUAL village, that everyone around this green would know each other. A Troy where everybody knows your name… we've certainly grown in 200+ years, but I believe in many ways Troy still IS a place where everybody knows your name. We are a tight knit community and one where people feel safe and at peace. And we may not have one watering hole where the locals congregate, but there are places throughout our City where our residents go to meet up and feel part of our welcoming community.

As I look out, I know everyone here… but that may not be the case for all of you. I hope that sometime this evening, you will make the effort to introduce

yourself to someone you DO NOT know. I bet some of you have already done it – there ARE pro networkers here – but if not, please take the opportunity to do it during the afterglow. It will help keep Troy a place where everybody knows your name…

I do want to thank Chris and his team at CMNTV for that intro video. I love watching his creativity come alive when I reach out each year about the State of the City Introduction video. Every year, he goes above and beyond and I am so grateful! He's back in the production truck producing now, but let's give him a big applause! [APPLAUSE]

Now is also a good time to thank London Baker, who is working with me for the next few weeks as part of his Senior May project, shadowing me and honing his already-developed skills as a young leader. London has been instrumental in creating some of the images you will see on the screen throughout the evening. Thank you, London! [APPLAUSE]

Our entire Troy City Council is here tonight – Mayor Pro Tem Mark Gunn, Councilwoman Theresa Brooks, Councilman Hirak Chanda, Councilwoman Rebecca Chamberlain-Creanga, Councilman David Hamilton, and Councilwoman Ellen Hodorek. Please stand up and say a group hello! [APPLAUSE]

Tonight, I plan to introduce the individual members of council a little differently than in the past. In previous years, I have introduced them individually one after another, but as is the nature of the State of the City address, those introductions are always in my voice, and certainly to an

extent, represent my views and opinions. I thought tonight it would be fun to have another council member introduce one of their colleagues. So, throughout this evening‘s address, there will be breaks from MY voice so that one of my colleagues can introduce another of our colleagues. I asked each council member to provide me with photos that will be used during the introductions. Each of them included something with his or her family, and as I reviewed each picture, I felt a connection to each of them. It was really touching! It was a reminder to me of WHY each of us are doing this.

This seems like the perfect time for me to introduce MY family… Most of you know Bethany – our First Lady of Troy – and the absolute love of my life. She knows me better than anyone and as the years of our relationship and marriage add up, I see more and more how she puts EVERYONE else first. Our City loves you, Honey, and so do I! Please stand up and say hello! [APPLAUSE]

I feel like I need to “re-introduce” our kids each year because each year they grow and mature so much! Arden is our 18-year-old creative, smart, beautiful, kind, and talented daughter. Canaan is our 16-year-old handsome, kind, smart, athletic and loving son. And Aven is our 13-year-old talented, charming, intelligent, giving and fun-loving daughter. Kiddos, please stand up and say hello! Mommy and I love you SO much, and you are EVERYTHING to us! [APPLAUSE]

And it may not be conventional, but I just want to acknowledge, Isaac Wagner, Arden’s boyfriend, who is here with us tonight. We love Isaac and

are so fortunate he jumps into the Baker Family fun as often as he does! [APPLAUSE]

Since last year's State of the City Address, we've enthusiastically appointed Frank Nastasi as our City Manager. Frank moved into this role after having served as our Police Chief, and after many, many years as a valuable member of our Troy Police Department. Frank hit the ground running and has been a breath of fresh air in the Manager's office. We are thankful for you, Frank! Please stand up and say hello! [APPLAUSE]

Deputy City Manager Bob Bruner and our new Assistant City Manager Chris Wilson are also here with us this evening. Bob, I'm thankful for the hard work you do for our City, and Chris, I'm looking forward to having you as part of our Team! [APPLAUSE]

Our City Attorney Lori Grigg Bluhm continues to serve as a constant in City Hall, with grace—often under fire!—and with the knowledge and wisdom that follows 25+ in the City Attorney office. While Lori may be critically acclaimed for her legal expertise, I know a different side to Lori too—the side that gushes when showing me pictures of her new grandson, or talking about her wonderful husband and son and daughter. It's again, a reminder, that titles… job descriptions… perceptions aside, we are all just human and we all share a need for connection and for family—in whatever form that comes for you. Lori, please stand and say hello! [APPLAUSE]

We also have several members of our very dedicated and high-performing City Staff here. Coincidentally, this week is Public Service Recognition

Week—a perfect time to honor and applaud our extremely talented and dedicated public servants in city government. If you're a City of Troy employee, would you please stand so we can applaud the best municipal employees in Metro Detroit?! Thank you all so much for what you do for our City—you make us shine and I am extremely grateful every single day! [APPLAUSE]

Most of you—if not all of you—know Cindy Stewart. In fact, it's pretty safe to say in the City of Troy, Cindy, everybody DOES know your name! Cindy has worked with 6 of Troy's 11 mayors, and each one of us has been her "favorite", right Cindy? I can't stress enough the value Cindy has brought to our City during her tenure, and she continues working hard for us even as life and circumstances change. Cindy, we thank you and applaud you for all you do and I hope you know how many people in this City believe the City of Troy and Cindy Stewart are synonymous! [APPLAUSE]

We are fortunate to have residents throughout this City who are eager to serve in some capacity. Through Mayor and Council appointments, our board and committee members serve our City in a quasi-government fashion, and they do it with little to no recognition. So, this evening, I'd like to provide you all with a small slice of gratitude and appreciation. If you serve on one of our Boards & Committees, please stand so we can applaud you and the important service you provide to the City of Troy! [APPLAUSE]

Like it or not, government is a TEAM sport and we are fortunate to have several of our fellow elected officials here representing Troy in the county,

state, and federal government. When I call your name, please stand up and we'll hold our applause until the end! Senator Mike Webber & his wife Julia, State Rep Sharon MacDonell, State Rep Tom Kuhn, County Commissioner Penny Luebs, County Commissioner Ann Erickson Gault, and Robert Wittenberg, County Treasurer. We also have Michael Tash, Deputy District Director for Congresswoman Haley Stevens, Michael Schmid, Regional Director for Senator Gary Peters and Spencer Vaughn, Oakland County Community Engagement Rep., Jennifer Phillips, 52-4 District Court Administrator, Breana Purdy, 52-4 District Court Deputy Administrator and Dr. Rich Machesky, Superintendent of our wonderful Troy School District. Thank you all for being here! [APPLAUSE]

I'm also extremely grateful to see some fellow mayors and friends out there in the audience—proving that our individual cities are just part of an overall community. I'm always grateful to have with us: Mayor Mike Taylor, from Sterling Heights, Mayor Paula Millan from Clawson, Mayor Roslyn Grafstein from Madison Heights, Mayor Michael Lesich from Fraser, Mayor Bryan Barnett from Rochester Hills, and Chris Barnett from Orion Township. [APPLAUSE]

We also have a special guest here with us tonight, someone I consider a friend, and someone most of you likely have NOT met. Joining us from our friends and neighbors across the river is Dave Epp, a Member of Parliament for Chatham-Kent-Leamington in Canada. I became acquainted with Dave doing my work as the Chair of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. Ironically, we first met in Washington DC, where we goofed around the White House and joked about how his country had once

burned it down… It was such a simpler time between the United States and Canada… But since then, we've stayed in constant contact and he was gracious enough to host Bethany and me, and other Great Lakes Fishery Commission members, on a tour of Parliament Hill in Ottawa last summer. Once again, we found ourselves goofing around and now I'm realizing that perhaps we shouldn't hang out, Dave, because we are bound to get in trouble soon! In all seriousness, though, I am honored to have Dave and his lovely wife, Charlene, with us this evening! Dave, please stand up and say hello! [APPLAUSE]

Please take a moment later this evening to introduce yourself to Mr. Epp and to show him how warm and welcoming we are here in Michigan.

At this point, if you're new to this, you may be thinking, "Wow, the Mayor has done nothing but introductions so far…" Well, you're right. The STRENGTH of our City IS its people—the people who work for Troy; the people who live in Troy. And the relationships that are built—relationships that I've made; relationships that each of you have made—our relationships matter…almost above anything else! So yes, I do take a lot of time for introductions – because I believe that if we're not going to recognize the people that matter to us, we can't and won't be successful. … and besides if you're not introduced, how can we live in a City where everybody knows your name? 😊

…

Each year, the location of the State of the City Address is no accident. I spend a lot of time thinking about where we are as a City, talking to others, and coming up with a location that not only will be interesting to attendees, but also be on message. Here we are at the Troy Historic Village, where history lives. Jen shared the history of this magnificent place in her Welcome message, but I wanted to speak to the beauty of Troy's history and the value of preserving the past—even as we look to the future. Behind you is the Troy Town Hall that was opened in 1927. For nearly fifty years, it is where Troy's government business happened. It was in that building that city COMMISSION meetings were held and where our government transitioned from a township to a city.

[CUE FIRST MINUTES SLIDE]

I recently found myself looking at the minutes from our very early days as a City—70 years ago. That's right, our City turns 70 this June and we are going to celebrate the CITY of Troy's birthday on June 14th from 1-4 at the Jeanne Stine park—I hope you'll join us! … But as I looked back at these initial minutes, and then clicked through the next several meeting minutes and realized what it takes to actually START a City—I am reminded of how far we have come since 1955. And also how we need to plan for Troy's NEXT 70 years. It's no secret that the Troy of 1955 does not really resemble the Troy of 2025—and as much as I love the Troy of the past, and TODAY'S Troy, we know we MUST move into the future.

[CUE BACKGROUND DEFAULT SLIDE]

I think most of you know I write this Address primarily on my own, and usually the bulk of the writing is done at my favorite Starbucks on Crooks and Corporate. I was pleasantly surprised to receive this text from Councilman Hirak Chanda on Sunday.

[CUE TEXT SLIDE]

Hirak is the newest member of Troy City Council, so we've had the least time to connect. But with this text, I thought: "Oh My God—Hirak gets me!" So, it's official, Hirak, we're now best council friends!

Let's learn a little bit more about Hirak, from Council Member Rebecca Chamberlain-Creanga. Rebecca, please come up!

[CUE HIRAK CHANDA SLIDE]

[CHAMBERLAIN-CREANGA INTRODUCTION OF CHANDA]

Thanks, Rebecca!

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

Just two nights ago, we unanimously approved the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget for the City of Troy, each of us stressing the strengths of our operational budget, and also recognizing the capital funding needs. The Budget maintains the priorities of City Council through significant investments in what matters most to our community:

- Preserving public health, safety, and welfare.
- Focusing on core facilities and infrastructure including Major and Local streets.
- Providing world class quality of life amenities.

And of course, the grand majority of our annual operating budget goes toward Public Safety—which squarely aligns with the priorities of our residents and business owners alike.

Our Troy Police Department continues to be a positive and powerful force within our City and maintains its Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation through the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police. … The Troy PD is a shining example of how a police department should operate, worthy of the respect it receives from our community. The leadership changed this year… With Frank Nastasi being appointed City Manager directly from his Chief of Police role, the appointment of a new police chief became necessary. Two qualified Captains sought the Chief role and after a competitive process, 25-year Troy Police Department veteran Josh Jones was appointed Chief of Police chief at the end of 2024. We thank Chief Jones for his continued service to our community and look forward to his leadership of our beloved Troy Police Department. Chief, if you could wave hello and accept our applause for YOU and for the entire Department! [APPLAUSE]

Our Troy Fire Department continues under the leadership of Chief Hullinger, who unfortunately couldn't join us tonight. With continued recruitment effort, new volunteers are joining the department at each

station. When they get there, they find top of the line equipment and training to ensure the historical success of our fire department continues. With our large volunteer department, I have often mentioned that if you live in the City of Troy, you most likely live near one of our volunteer firefighters. Because of that, our firefighters bring a certain community perspective that can't be beat. We applaud their continued dedication and service to our community and thank them wholeheartedly! [APPLAUSE]

EMS continues to be a focus for us this year, as we look to consistently improve the services provided. We utilize the private sector for our EMS—many years with Alliance, and now with Universal—and are now looking to reduce times and increase ambulance availability in our City, in a restructured deal. We have been studying our EMS for the past couple of years and evaluating how to provide the best possible EMS service for our residents, without breaking the bank. We are looking at many options, ranging from our continued use of the private sector, to a hybrid model, to potentially bringing EMS in house. We don't know where we will land at this point. But I can assure you that what we do end up doing will be the most effective use of your tax dollars and will provide the best care possible for our residents.

…

I'd like to call Councilman Chanda up to provide his introduction of our Mayor Pro Tem, Mark Gunn. Hirak—

[CUE MARK GUNN SLIDE]

[CHANDA INTRODUCTION OF GUNN]

Thanks, Hirak! Well done!

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

As our community continues to evolve, our Parks & Recreation needs must do the same. And we've been hard at work! We've recently broken ground on a regulation size Cricket Field—the FIRST in the Midwest—at Boulan Park, which will open this Summer. We've broken ground on eight new pickleball courts at Firefighters Park, also opening this Summer. We're building an Inclusive playground at Boulan Park, and because of federal funding obtained by Congresswoman Haley Stevens, we're well underway on a massive park upgrade project at Sylvan Glen Lake Park, bringing new play equipment, a pavilion, and a cardboard sledding hill. These will join the already added bathrooms and better parking, and all are consistent with our 5-year Parks and Recreation Plan.

We've adjusted and increased our hours at the Community Center to allow for increased court time. We've responded to resident safety concerns about crossing Long Lake Road into Jaycee Park and the third phase of our Troy Trails, seeking and obtaining SEMCOG TAP grants for a safe pedestrian crossing from south of Long Lake into Jaycee Park and connecting to our beautiful trail. This new pedestrian crossing will make it safer and more efficient for hundreds, if not thousands, of residents to go from their neighborhoods and into the park—without having to walk all the way down to John R Road or Rochester Road to cross, or worse, risk their lives crossing Long Lake without a crosswalk. This grant funding will also

increase pedestrian safety on Square Lake and Livernois roads, adding sidewalks where they were desperately needed.

We continue to do important work for our senior population here in Troy.

[CUE SENIOR CENTER OPENING SLIDE]

This year we opened the refreshed Senior Dining Center at our Troy Community Center, which has truly become our “Senior Center”, with spaces to watch television, spaces to play games, and spaces to eat and socialize. Soon, there will be new signage on Livernois Road, advertising our Senior Center for thousands of drivers daily, and welcoming our senior population in.

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

It is important for us to recognize the value of contributions this aging population has provided for our community—whether through something like simply—and consistently—paying their taxes all of these years, or all of the volunteer and service hours they have provided to make our community what it is today. Council and I will never leave our seniors behind, and I hope Bill Rhoads, the President of Friends of Troy Seniors, who couldn’t be with us tonight, knows that. Although you’re not here, Bill, we love you and are so thrilled to see your increased optimism and positivity about the changes we’ve made at the Community Center for our seniors!

Two councilmembers who have consistently and vocally pressed for Community Center service upgrades are Councilman Hamilton and Councilwoman Chamberlain-Creanga. David, please come up for your introduction of Rebecca!

[CUE REBECCA CHAMBERLAIN-CREANGA SLIDE]

[HAMILTON INTRODUCTION OF CHAMBERLAIN-CREANGA]

Thanks, David! Great job!

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

The private sector in Troy continues to thrive as well—across all industries. Truly across ALL industries. A couple of weeks ago, Tara and I did one of our “Focus Troy” business visits and were blown away by Paul C. Scott Plumbing. We had a wonderful conversation with the principals and left with a deep appreciation of how being a plumber is not what it used to be—and how technology has dramatically changed the industry. We know that there is a skilled trade deficit, and I was impressed to learn how Paul C. Scott Plumbing is working to build apprenticeships to help solve that problem here in Troy. I’m honored that Chris Scott is here with us this evening and am extremely thankful for the quality customer service and their people-focused business practices at Paul C. Scott Plumbing.

Our private sector is a powerhouse in Troy because we’ve always believed that government should serve as a partner—not a barrier—to progress.

That's why we're proud to be a city where the private sector doesn't just invest—it thrives. From innovative startups to world-class corporations, Troy continues to attract businesses that create jobs, build our economy, and enhance our quality of life. We're committed to maintaining a stable, predictable environment where entrepreneurs and established industries alike can grow with confidence, because when the private sector succeeds, our entire community benefits.

This mindset and policy are key to what happens next at the old Kmart Headquarters property, on likely the most valuable undeveloped piece of land in Oakland County, if not all of Metro Detroit.

Last year I shared the good news that the University of Michigan had purchased a portion of the 40 acres to build a quarter of a billion-dollar Michigan Medicine facility, providing quality healthcare access to hundreds of thousands of Oakland County residents, and spurring the massive economic development of a key gateway to our City. Since last year, we've now seen the Forbes/Frankel group put in their development plans for the entire site, seeking to modify the existing PUD. Currently before the Planning Commission, this PUD will likely soon move to City Council where we will be asked to approve the PUD concept plan, so that Michigan Medicine can start building.

This is an evolving process—as are the plans—but I do want to show some of the renderings that have been submitted to date. Recognizing these renderings are part of PUD concept plan and not for site plan approval, I caution each of you that the final development likely will look different than what's on the screen, and that's by design.

[CUE KMART SITE SLIDE]

Through this process, we've been reminded that the University of Michigan is a constitutional corporation, which means they are not subject to our zoning laws or design standards—similar to how our Troy School District operates and builds. Rightly so, this has given some of us pause, and yet, we also need to trust the process and recognize that the University of Michigan likely won't provide all of the details we'd like them to—and that has to be okay. We have to look at what the university has done in Ann Arbor and other municipalities, and also remember that our Troy Schools have the same power and authority—consistently NOT letting us down with their buildings.

We also have to have some faith and trust in Nate Forbes and Stanley Frankel—two gentleman who have never done anything but HELP this City and make it a better and more beautiful place. To think that either of them would build—or allow to be built—something that isn't at least as good as or BETTER than their prize jewel—and OURS—the Somerset Collection, perhaps lacks context. Not all of you know Nate and Stanley like I do, and I fully respect that. Let me say this—I'd be the first to tell you of any concerns I had about a developer—as I've done in the past—and I couldn't be more confident in Nate and Stanley—their vision for this property and their insistence that it be done right and consistent with what makes sense for our City and from a business perspective. And I believe THAT is our role—to provide private sector business the opportunities and tools to thrive, without unnecessarily getting in their way, all the while ensuring a proper balance and what is right for our City.

After sitting vacant for nearly twenty years—with no activity on the site, but the regular mowing of grass—I look forward to having this PUD come before council and celebrating the shovels in the ground in the very near future. The transformational project—in whatever final form it takes—will be nothing but good for the City, and I am excited about it! All that said, I trust that our Planning Commissioners—many of whom who are here this evening—will perform their role in this process with the care and consistency we expect from them—and that my colleagues on Council will balance all interests, as appropriate, when it is before us. That consistency and stability is one of Troy's strongest and best assets.

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

At this time, I'd ask Mayor Pro Tem Gunn to come forward for his introduction of Councilwoman Brooks!

[CUE THERESA BROOKS SLIDE]

[GUNN INTRODUCTION OF BROOKS]

Thank you, Mark! Well done!

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

While we sit here in a place that focuses and highlights Troy's past, let's pivot and talk about Troy's future…

Year after year, I've shared how our City remains on a strong financial footing, which is the truth. Our Triple A bond rating, our consistent conservative budgeting practices, a healthy unassigned general fund balance for our rainy days, and one of the lowest property tax millages in the state of Michigan. So I can comfortably say our economic health is strong. Our day-to-day operations budget is solid. Year over year we consistently bring in more than we spend and so long as the economy remains stable, that will continue.

Last year, I briefly touched on the fact that we are 70 years old, have aging infrastructure, a greatly reduced capital millage—so that our operating millage can stay stable and fund our top priorities and core responsibilities despite Headlee rollbacks—and that it was time to seriously look at debt financing, so that we could address critical capital needs.

By a show of hands, how many of you have heard that we are working to put a Bond Proposal on the November ballot?

(Address the amount of hands up or not up)

The City of Troy is 70 years old. We may be the City of Tomorrow, Today, but tonight I am telling you, we need to BUILD for tomorrow, today. And the most efficient and most conservative way to do that is with a capital bond. It will provide an influx of capital up front, allowing us to tackle big projects—projects that then come OFF of our long, and getting longer, deferred maintenance capital plan and savings us millions of dollars in the process.

This isn't a new idea—this is something we have been discussing for many, many years, and I'm excited that we are having the honest and real discussions in anticipation of putting a Bond proposal on the November ballot.

Our City Staff has taken a deep dive into our capital needs, and over a series of meetings from January through April, presented us with the most pressing capital projects—many projects that we have seen get pushed back year after year in budgets that properly funded the operation of our City, but could only afford to minimally address critical capital spending. At this point, there is only so far you can kick a can down the road!

While we are still working out the details—let me tell you that we collectively have done a ton of work to get to this point. Our City Staff has been peppered with questions from Council, residents, and frankly, each other—as all of us work together in anticipation of approving bond language for the ballot. There has been substantial community engagement done—whether through surveys, Troy Talks with our City Manager and Department Heads, conversations around dining room tables, Rotary Club presentations, Social Media posts, or one-on-one conversations throughout this City!

We know what our City NEEDS and we know what our residents WANT. We also have recognized over the past few months that, for many, there is an increased concern about the economy and how things are playing out at the national and global level. We've responded, in kind, reducing the

amount of projects to include in a bond proposal, which will require less of an investment from each taxpayer.

The Bond proposal we are working on would provide the necessary capital to address four major pillars—all of which MUST be addressed to keep our City safe, competitive, and to provide residents with the amenities they are expecting. It shouldn't surprise you to hear these four pillars—Public Safety, Parks & Recreation, Streets, and yes… a new Troy Public Library!

Again, we haven't approved the ballot language yet, but seem to be narrowing down to a bond proposal that would have a minimal impact on your pocketbook, but a maximum impact on our City's capital budget. If approved by voters in November, there will be dedicated funds for Police body worn cameras and public safety technology upgrades; Fire apparatus replacement—that's a fancy way of saying new fire trucks!; a sizeable and substantial investment in poor and failing roads; Park improvements, additional trails & pathways, more pickleball courts, and Community Center upgrades; and the replacement of a 55-year-old library that has been deemed obsolete by modern library standards.

I've learned it's easy for a resident to know when you need to replace a road, but it's not as easy for a resident to know when you need to replace a Library. To help that process, our Library team has been giving tours of the existing building—but not just the public-facing areas you are used to seeing. ALL of it—the good, the bad, and the truly ugly. That commitment to transparency will continue as our Library team is offering tours to ANYONE who signs up.

[CUE QR CODE SLIDE]

And it is easy to schedule! This QR code will take you to a calendar where you can schedule your Library tour. I cannot tell you how many people saw the need for a new Library much clearer after they took this tour.

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

A year ago, I stood behind this podium in a VERY hot Fire and Police Training Center, and made the case that we have A+ Library services in a D+ building, and I said it was time we had a new Library building that matched the award-winning service our TPL team provides. Here we are a year later and we are on the path necessary to achieve that goal!

Just a week and a half ago, we had a joint Troy City Council and Planning Commission meeting where the first look at a potential new Troy Public Library was unveiled. Again, I will caution everyone that this is a preliminary design, it will be subject to a cost analysis that is coming in about a month, and would be dependent on the voters of Troy approving a Bond Proposal this November. But all those caveats aside, I'm excited to show you what was presented!

[CUE NEW LIBRARY SLIDE]

HBM Architects designed this Library, but it was not done in a vacuum. They utilized the extensive report and analysis provided by ReThinking Libraries, worked with Library and City Staff, and synthesized all of the

feedback given by Library patrons and city residents as part of extensive community engagement projects. You can see the plan is to locate a new library over by the Community Center and it is designed to be a Library to meet today's needs, but also one with which our City can grow.

THIS is the Library our community deserves… and now we have to see if this is the Library our community will vote to pay for!

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

The first person that stood up last year when I said we should have a new Library was Councilman Hamilton. I'll ask Councilwoman Hodorek to come up now with her introduction for Councilman Hamilton.

[CUE DAVID HAMILTON SLIDE]

[HODOREK INTRODUCTION OF HAMILTON]

Thank you, Ellen – what a fitting introduction for our homegrown member of Council.

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

So here is the truth. I'm getting a little bit reflective about my years as Mayor. It's no secret I am term limited—at most I have 2 ½ years left in this role. I get asked A LOT what I am doing "next"—which I suppose is the nature of politics today. That conversation will come, but while I may be term-limited, I am not a lame duck! I know there is so much I can do in this

role in the time I have left—and I will spend every minute and every day working hard for our City that I love.

I said a minute ago that I'm a bit reflective…and I am. Did you know that the tradition of saying the State of the Union IS – fill in the blank – by the President of the United States only dates back to President Ford? He started the tradition in 1975 when he said the "State of our Union is not good." In the 50 years since then, the President has almost always said "strong" or something positive and uplifting, with very limited outliers.

As you saw while Tara was introducing me earlier, I've always said the State of our City is STRONG… and it is, and has been during my time as Mayor. There's no denying the strength of our City on so many levels. But the political scientist in me wonders if I've done the City a disservice—or rather WE have—by not more consistently and loudly talking about the capital needs and shortcomings in our annual budgets; by not more frequently demonstrating the critical infrastructure projects that we have to delay each year because we don't have the capital necessary to do the project. I only bring this up because there are and will be people who won't believe that we need to pass a bond. And while part of that will just be a general skepticism in government, part of it will be because we are consistently singing Troy's financial praises—all true by the way, but not always a crystal-clear picture.

None of what I've just said should sound alarm bells and don't worry, I am still Troy's biggest cheerleader, and it is easy to be! But as I do this role longer and longer, I find myself thinking a lot about these things… and

maybe I'm alone, but I find it interesting and worthy of something for all of you to think about as we move into the future.

…

There's one council introduction left, so I'll ask Councilwoman Brooks to come up and introduce Councilwoman Hodorek.

[CUE ELLEN HODOREK SLIDE]

[BROOKS INTRODUCTION OF HODOREK]

Thank you, Theresa! A wonderful introduction!

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

This is Councilwoman Hodorek's last State of the City address as a member of council. Yes, this is Ellen's twelfth year, and she is term-limited. Eleven and a half years ago, Ellen was sworn in, and these are her first words as a member of Troy City Council.

[CUE ELLEN VIDEO SLIDE]

[CUE DEFAULT BACKGROUND SLIDE]

Ellen's comments about civility and decorum quickly resonated with me. I, too, have always aimed to serve in this manner. And frankly, I LOVE that she called out Mike, who hates being called out, mentioning that HE had dinner on the table for her when she got home from work and before heading out to council. And since Mike hates being called out, it's a perfect time for ME to do so – Hi Mike! Thank you for sharing Ellen with us all at a

time when you'd certainly prefer to spend more time up north or out east with family.

Ellen, you and I, and to a certain extent, David, have served with a divided and potentially dysfunctional council in the past…much different than what we have now. I want you to know that part of YOUR legacy on Troy City Council is moving past the division and those previous issues. Because today, the seven of us will not always agree, but we always treat each other with dignity and respect, and a collegiality that is a model for councils throughout Metro Detroit.

I hope you all have seen that this evening—I used an online randomizer to determine which council members would introduce each other… and I truly wasn't worried about who would be randomly selected for each person. It is because we ARE a team and we DO work together for the good of the community. I said it earlier—we may have differences of opinions and differ in how we view certain issues or topics—but that doesn't prohibit us from maintaining civility and decorum. I genuinely care for each of you and yes, it may look different with each of you, but make no mistake, each of YOU make ME do this job better. And the seven of us all deeply love our City, and I hope that for all of you in attendance tonight or watching from home, that is one of the takeaways from this evening.

So thank you, Ellen, for all you have done since 2013 to tirelessly work to make this body a better one. [APPLAUSE]

BUT, you still have 6 months left. And wow — these next 6 months are going to be consequential.

…

The blend of our quality public amenities and services, and our stellar quality of life, our award-winning Troy School District and our thriving private sector, often elevates Troy to a level that gets national recognition. For the past two years, Troy was ranked the #10 best place to live in the COUNTRY by Livability.com—two years in a row! And, it's just been released that WE'RE NOW #7—one of only two cities in Michigan to make the top 100, and the only one to be in the top 10!

You feel it in our community. Sure, there are complaints at times—that is natural and to be expected. But you do have a special feeling when you're in Troy—and there's no denying the feeling of community we really have here. That community where you're not surprised that everybody knows your name… or that community that rallies around you when you are in need… or that community that consistently stands out for POSITIVE stories.

We live in a City that is filled with nearly 90,000 people—different races, different religions, different voices—yet ONE community.

[GO SLOW ….]

We've talked about Troy's past… Troy's present… and Troy's future. We've talked about the paradox of being in a strong financial position, but also in serious need of a bond to address critical capital needs. We are here at a place that celebrates Troy's history, with buildings and artifacts

that helped make Troy what it is today. And it is dependent on all of US to help make Troy what it will be tomorrow. And I have faith in all of you—in all of the people of Troy. I believe in the KINDNESS and DECENCY of our residents, and in the INNOVATIVE and COMMUNITY-FOCUSED nature of our businesses. I know that together we will move Troy forward, all while celebrating and honoring its past! Friends, as our City turns 70 next month, I say to you… the State of OUR City is STRONG, and with an approved Bond in November, it will be even stronger! [APPLAUSE]

Thank you all for coming this evening, or from watching from home! God Bless You all, God Bless Troy, and God Bless America!