



2008
State
OF THE
CITY
REPORT

Moving in the
Right Direction.

Presented by
Mayor Robert J. Duffy
Rochester, New York

Hochstein School of Music and Dance
Monday, April 7, 2008



My third State of the City Address is a celebration of the optimism and progress that makes Rochester the jewel of upstate New York. Rochester is our home, and we are proud of it. From our change of seasons, to our deep history of social rights to our renowned leadership in business and industry, higher education and healthcare, Rochester is on the right track and moving in the right direction.

I am proud to be our city's cheerleader and number one optimist. But I will never make the mistake of glossing over our challenges. Every city has its obstacles. No government - whether federal or state, county or city, town or village - is immune from looming budget shortfalls. Nor are they from faltering economies, crime, or challenges to their educational systems.

Governments are in the business of making sure that citizens are safe, that children are educated and that businesses thrive. We should expect to be held accountable to invest tax dollars in a way that will make our communities the best they can be.

Make no mistake that we are making progress on these priorities. Two local companies, PAETEC and ESL, have chosen to make a significant presence downtown and forever change our Main Street and our skyline. We saw a major new grocery open in a key city neighborhood. Our housing initiatives are hitting on all cylinders, from new developments to demolitions to incentives that will attract residents. Our arts and cultural amenities are thriving. We are supporting the city's first Frederick Douglass Resource Center and we are renowned for our music festivals. Rochester's parks and recreational assets are second to none.

From meticulously maintained streets and sidewalks, to street lights to refuse and recycling pickup, our citizens benefit from world-class City services and we are making it even easier for residents to access their government.

It is my belief that the strength of our community is the heart and soul of its people. We must do right by our customers and we are actively seeking their input and doing everything we can to aggressively reduce crime and violence.

This is just a small peek at the highlights of the State of the City report. After reading it through, I hope you will agree that indeed, we are moving in the right direction.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Duffy, Mayor

“Making sure that our citizens are safe on the streets of our city is my number one priority. Safety must be the bedrock on which all of our plans and progress are built.”

— Mayor Robert J. Duffy, 2008 State of the City Address

2007 PUBLIC SAFETY RESULTS



- Our 911 call system computers are being replaced as part of a three-year upgrade and we are adding a feature that **allows reverse calling to cell phones**. Rochester is only one of five cities in the country to test these 911 improvements.



- In the last year, the Rochester Fire Department (RFD) has installed **1,755 smoke detectors, 585 carbon monoxide detectors and 1,336 batteries** in city homes. RFD will continue their aggressive outreach.

- We have added **25 new public safety positions** to the force, helping us to expand police presence in our neighborhoods.



- We are installing **50 high-tech surveillance cameras** in high crime areas with location input from neighborhood associations.

- We have implemented an **anti-graffiti campaign** to reduce incidence by 25% quarter over quarter.



- We have successfully implemented **improvements to Durand Eastman Beach**, including making public transportation available to the site. Record crowds of more than 60,000 came to the beach last summer.

- Our citywide curfew program has resulted in **204 encounters with juveniles**, of which 190 offenders have been directed to the Hillside Children's Center Curfew Site. There have been 11 arrests.



- Our Office of Public Integrity continues to investigate reports of **fraud, corruption, waste and abuse**. During the last year they conducted 65 investigations.

“Attracting more jobs, more residents and more visitors to our city is a priority. I am pleased to report that we are making headway.”

— Mayor Robert J. Duffy, 2008 State of the City Address

2007 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESULTS



- We are moving in the right direction with Midtown Plaza. The state has pledged up to \$65 million to demolish its existing footprint and in its wake will rise the new world headquarters for PAETEC Communications. It will bring **1,100 new jobs to downtown**. CEO and President, Arunas Chesonis, has made a major commitment to Rochester’s future.
- We secured \$4 million in state funding that will be used to create **145 market rate housing units** and renovate commercial, retail and restaurant space in four historic buildings in our center city.
- We invested in and broke ground in February on the Mills at High Falls where **67 new units** will be available for occupancy next spring.
- ESL, one of our area’s largest financial institutions, has followed suit and will be building its corporate headquarters at 225 Chestnut Street. The move will bring **300 more jobs to downtown**, with plans to expand to 500. CEO and President Dave Fiedler could have chosen anywhere to locate and chose downtown Rochester as the best place to do business.
- We are continuing our efforts to **attract residents to the city**. The University of Rochester has joined us, along with Kodak, Xerox, Unity Health, Visiting Nurse Service and PAETEC to provide financial incentives for homeownership.
- We began an aggressive campaign to eliminate the backlog of vacant structures throughout the city. So far we have taken down **494 abandoned buildings**. We have received an additional \$2 million in Restore NY funds to continue this much needed work.
- We completed our financial audit of the local teams that take advantage of City resources, including PAETEC Park and Blue Cross Arena. Unfortunately, we discovered that the previous owners of the Rhinos did not merit City support. We are proud to welcome **Rob Clark** to our community as the new owner of the Rochester Rhinos soccer team and look forward to an exciting season at PAETEC Park.
- We are seeing nearly **300 new downtown housing units** in 12 different development projects.





- We completed a **housing market study** and are maintaining our commitment to focused investments in our neighborhoods to obtain maximum impact.
- We completed the **sale of the fast ferry** and have refinanced the debt to reduce the long-term impact of the project on taxpayers.
- We have **secured commitments** from the Great Lakes Cruise Coalition to dock more of their luxury passenger ships at the Port of Rochester.
- We are working with the Toronto Port Authority and have issued a Request for Qualifications to the private sector to provide ferry passenger service between our terminals. **This would be privately funded and involve no taxpayer dollars.**
- We have completed the concept design for **extending River Street** to support redevelopment at the Port.
- We have committed more than a half million dollars to help **make the Frederick Douglass Resource Center a reality.** It is near completion on King Street across from the home of Susan B. Anthony.
- We promised to **grow our music festivals** and we have been true to our word. We increased our sponsorship of the Rochester International Jazz Festival. Last year they set a new record drawing more than 120,000 festival goers from around the world to 170 concerts.
- We are also promoting economic development in our neighborhoods. Last year Wegmans closed its Driving Park store leaving the residents without a nearby grocery store. Wegmans donated the site. The City worked with local developers to bring in a superb grocery store chain – Price Rite. They **employ 110 people** – almost all of them from the neighborhood. The City is reinvesting the \$400,000 received from the sale into focused economic development in the same neighborhood – a truly collaborative effort.



“If public safety is the bedrock of our city’s progress, education is the foundation on which we build a brighter future.”

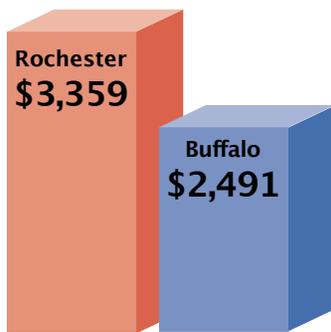
— Mayor Robert J. Duffy, 2008 State of the City Address

2007 EDUCATION RESULTS



- The City of Rochester is very generous in providing financial aid to its school district. We continue to provide **\$119.1 million** in revenue from property and sales taxes to the Rochester City School District.

Local School District Support



Cost per pupil

- We created “Summer of Opportunity” in conjunction with area businesses to provide job-ready training and jobs to our city youth. Last summer **82 employers hired 522 young workers** as part of this program.
- More than **200 people** from across the community have participated in literacy strategy meetings this year.

- As part of the Mayor’s Literacy Initiative we are developing partnerships with non-profit agencies and corporations, like Paychex, to **collect books from their employees** for city youth.

- We have added **5 AmeriCorps Vista volunteers** to work in the City’s branch libraries to provide literacy outreach to families. By the summer every city branch library will have one.



- We have created “**Teen Centers**” at the Central Library and the Maplewood and Arnett branches to provide enhanced youth “Safe To Be Smart” programs.
- We broke ground on the **Thomas P. Ryan Community Center**, which will combine School #33, a new recreation center and a new library.
- Our anti-truancy program is **now fully functional**. The Rochester Police Department picks up truant youth and transports them to the Rochester City School District’s Truancy Center for triage and appropriate follow up.

“Our goal is making it easier for customers to get the information and services they need from City government—and provide those services more efficiently.”

— Mayor Robert J. Duffy, 2008 State of the City Address

2007 CUSTOMER SERVICE RESULTS

- **311 - One Call to City Hall.** Whether you need a pothole filled, have a question about trash pick-up, or want to report a neighborhood issue - just dial 3-1-1. We are using some of the most advanced call-system software in the nation. 311 is not only improving our service to customers - it is increasing our efficiency in tracking and responding to their calls.
- We are improving service on the Internet. City residents can now **pay their taxes on-line** this year and we have made it easier for entrepreneurs to find out about business opportunities in the city.
- **We continue to fight for Rochester's Fair Share.** This year the Mayor and senior administration officials made 12 trips to Albany to meet with elected officials and policymakers to fight for our Fair Share of state aid. On a per capita basis Rochester lags behind Buffalo by \$158 per resident. This translates to a total gap of \$34.7 million. Thanks to our efforts, our local state delegation and Governor Paterson succeeded in narrowing the gap in a difficult state budget year. We still have a long way to go, so we will continue our efforts.
- **RBN - Rochester By the Numbers** has been fully implemented with our management reviews. Every department is **held accountable to meet quantifiable goals.** We are measuring progress, assessing performance and finding ways to be more efficient.
- The environment is a priority to this Administration. Our “Green Team” has been hard at work. By the end of the year, we will have 13 hybrids in the City fleet. There are 55 flex-fuel cars on order for the RPD. In City offices, 25% of the electricity we use comes from renewable sources. Last fall we achieved **Gold level LEED certification** for the construction of our new Water Operations Center.
- Operation Clean Sweep is a big success. Over the last two years, **more than 10,000 people** have volunteered their time to help cleanup and beautify our city.
- Operation Cool Sweep continues to be extremely popular. City Fire, Recreation and Environmental Services Departments **open fire hydrants in neighborhoods to cool off kids** on hot days and provide relief to residents with limited access to swimming facilities.
- **We have beefed up City Hall on the Road.** Although we still have the traditional format of bringing the Mayor and the senior management team into neighborhood facilities to meet one-on-one with residents. This year we have done several neighborhood street walks, focused on target groups like young professionals and held six City Hall on the Roads for budget discussions.





“There is one other commitment I made last year—to perform an in-depth survey of customer satisfaction with City government. We surveyed more than 600 city residents, landlords, business owners and visitors about how they feel...”

— Mayor Robert J. Duffy, 2008 State of the City Address

- **83.4%** of you feel that “We still have a long way to go, but the city is improving.” We are moving in the right direction.
- **69%** of the respondents feel the city is moving in the right direction.
- Respondents scored the city **above average** – from a B–minus to a B–plus, in a variety of areas:
 - Air Quality
 - Water services and quality
 - Festivals, concerts and music series
 - The city’s restaurants and shopping
 - Our sports teams
 - Parks and recreation
 - Trash pickup
 - Leaf pickup
 - Snow removal and plowing

- Respondents rated the city **average** in some areas, with “C–level” grades:
 - Parking
 - Neighborhood noise
 - Traffic
 - The condition of our streets and sidewalks
 - The condition of housing

Other highlights included:

- The men and women of the Rochester Fire Department received the highest grade in the survey ... an **A–minus**.
- Our curfew and truancy programs received a **solid B+**.
- **Seven out of ten** support the reopening of Durand Eastman beach.
- **94%** like our “Clean Sweep” program.
- **86%** strongly support our stepped up demolition of vacant homes.



“Forty–seven and a half percent said they feel less safe. That is simply unacceptable. Nobody should ever have to live in fear. We cannot and will not relent in our efforts to make this city—every single part of it—a safe place to live, work or play.”

— Mayor Robert J. Duffy, 2008 State of the City Address

- Almost **nine out of ten** respondents thought the so called “Zero Tolerance” effort was either a good or great idea.

- **85%** of the respondents thought that our hiring of more police officers was a good idea.

“Instead of shrinking from this structural budget shortfall—we will embrace this challenge as a tool to restructure and reshape our city government.”

— Mayor Robert J. Duffy, 2008 State of the City Address

2008 REORGANIZATION GOALS

I will soon announce a **major reorganization** and a new delivery system for city services. We will see teams from several departments including Neighborhood Empowerment Teams, Economic Development, Community Development, and Rochester Police and Rochester Fire Departments work from locations in each quadrant of the city to provide City Hall services directly to neighborhoods.

The new configuration will provide **one-stop shopping** for city services such as police, fire, permits, grants, code enforcement and neighborhood services in each quadrant of the City. This change may involve closing some existing

offices and locations, but our aim is to **decentralize many city services** into quadrant, neighborhood service centers.



2008 PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS

- We will execute a **permanent curfew** for youth under 18. 100% of offenders will be dealt with appropriately and connected to services.
- We will strive to **reduce by 20%** the response time to Priority One 911 calls quarter over quarter.
- We will implement the most effective crime control strategies, including use of surveillance cameras. The goal is to **reduce all major violent crime categories by 15%**, quarter over quarter.
- We will continue **process improvements** to public safety recruitment, testing and overtime practices to ensure authorized strength with increased diversity in Police, Fire and Emergency Communications.
- We will continue increased foot, bike and proactive car patrols within the Inner Loop and in targeted neighborhoods to increase actual and perceived levels of safety, so that an officer can be observed on the street **every three minutes**.
- We will progress with beach improvements to ensure a **successful reopening** of Durand Eastman Beach on Memorial Day.
- We will ensure that Rural Metro meets all **performance standards** under the new ambulance contract.



2008 EDUCATION GOALS

- We will execute a **permanent anti-truancy policy** with the RCSD. The goal being that 100% of offenders are dealt with appropriately and connected to services.
- We will work through the Rochester Education and Literacy Commission to focus all constituencies on strategies that **improve graduation rates**.



- We will ensure that City priorities are **reflected sufficiently** in the City School District Facilities Modernization initiative.
- We will implement phase two of a community-wide campaign to **increase literacy** of at-risk students and their families.
- We will support public and private initiatives to **increase employment** of youth and young adults by 10% over the prior year as an important supplement to their formal education.
- We will implement the **next phase roll-out** of the Emergency Training and Information Network.
- We will ensure progress toward the successful opening of the **Frederick Douglass Resource Center** by year's end.

2008 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- We will oversee **Midtown/PAETEC headquarters development**, and the development of contiguous parcels at the eight-acre site.
- We will continue to progress on efforts to **secure City access** to and use of the ferry terminal.
- We will oversee the final phase of reconstruction of the **South Avenue Garage**.
- We will strive to **resolve the positions** related to long-term provision of water services to City customers, including reservoir options and negotiations with Monroe County Water Authority on contract renewal, and with N.Y. State on our Hemlock watershed.
- We will continue to **revise and enforce our Housing Code** to better reflect our priority to help property owners and tenants maintain the value and condition of their parcels.
- We will implement our **revised Housing Policy and a Focused Investment Policy** to increase the valuation of city property by at least 2% over the prior year, including a focus on downtown market rate housing.
- We will oversee an **increase in building permits** for city developments to yield an increased taxable value.
- We will oversee the next phase implementation of the **Port Master Plan**.
- We will identify and pursue the most viable alternative for use of the **Sibley Building downtown**.
- We will identify and pursue the most viable alternative for the **Blue Cross Arena operation**.
- We will identify and pursue the most viable alternative for the **High Falls operation**.
- We will provide the necessary oversight of the next phase of **PAETEC Park**.
- We will represent the City's interests during the next phase of **Renaissance Square planning**.



2008 CUSTOMER SERVICE GOALS



- We will implement a **year-round customer satisfaction** measurement/improvement process to include all of our major constituencies.
- We will report on **Rochester By the Numbers** priority measures.
- We will oversee the implementation of the **311 Call Center** to meet all customer response goals.
- We will ensure progress toward a comprehensive revitalization of the **City's website** by mid-2009.
- We will complete the **City property revaluation** process.
- We will implement a **comprehensive employee performance** evaluation system by this summer, including pay-for-performance programs.



It's about **showing pride** in our city.

- We will implement a **spring Clean Sweep campaign** that meets performance and participation goals.
- We will undertake the **2008-09 Capital Improvement Program and Operating Budget processes**, incorporating the Mayor's priorities for service improvements/consolidations/efficiencies.
- We will implement major **Information Technology initiatives**, including consolidation of IT staffs and strategy for migration from legacy systems to packaged software, such as: Human Resources, Payroll, Finance, Budget, Accounting and Purchasing.
- We will implement a **formal training and development process** that enables all City employees to contribute as fully as possible to our priority areas.
- We will recommend an **aggressive health care cost containment** strategy to save at least \$1 million for 2008-09.
- We will recommend the most cost-effective option for the future of our **street lighting system**.
- We will oversee the growth and dissemination of the **"One City Fund"** to underwrite the Mayor's priorities with private sector funding.
- We will deliver products/services that **exceed customer expectations** in all areas, as measured by 311 calls and our customer survey instruments.
- We will execute a **state and federal lobbying effort** to help close any 2007-08 and 2008-09 budget gaps and to help fund the above policy priorities.



For more information contact
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Or visit www.cityofrochester.gov