



OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF
THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF LANSING
PROCEEDINGS OF JANUARY 26, 2009



ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

City Council Chambers
Lansing, Michigan

The City Council of the City of Lansing met in regular session and was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Quinney.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Allen, Dunbar, Jeffries, Quinney, Robinson, Wood

ABSENT: Councilmembers Hewitt (Arrived at 5:15 p.m.) and Kaltenbach (Arrived at 5:05 p.m.)

The Council observed a moment of Meditation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by President Quinney

APPROVAL OF PRINTED COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

By Councilmember Robinson

To approve the printed Council Proceedings of January 22, 2009

Motion carried

TABLED ITEMS

1. BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
 - a. Authorizing Litigation Against the Mayor to Compel the Opening of Waverly and Red Cedar golf courses

COUNCILMEMBERS' COMMENTS
AND CITY CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilmember Allen announced the Alzheimer 2009: Has Anything Changed? event.

Councilmember Wood announced the Ruth Hallman's 2nd Annual Birthday with Chili and Soup event.

City Attorney Smith gave extensive information related to the Board of Water and Light's filing of its proposed rate increase notice in the City Clerk's Office.

Councilmember Kaltenbach arrived at the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Council President Quinney wished his sister Shauna Embry a happy birthday.

SPEAKER REGISTRATION FOR
PUBLIC COMMENT

Clerk Swope announced that the public comment registration form(s) for those intending to address Council on legislative or City government matters will be collected and that only those persons who have fully completed the form(s) will be permitted to speak.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Public Comment on Legislative Matters:

Legislative Matters included the following public hearings:

There were no Public Hearings.

There were no speakers for Legislative Matters.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ON CITY GOVERNMENT RELATED MATTERS:

William Hubbell of 3916 Wedgewood Dr. spoke about the State of the City address.

John Pollard of 1718 Blair St. spoke about various city matters.

Darnell E. Oldham, Sr. spoke about various city matters.

Councilmember Hewitt arrived at the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

Stan Shuck of 818 Cooper Ave. spoke about various city matters.

LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #008

BY THE COUNCILMEMBER SANDY ALLEN
RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANSING

WHEREAS, the Lansing Building Safety Building Inspector has declared a certain commercial structure at **612 N. Larch St.**, Parcel # **33-01-01-16-227-161** and Legal Description: **Com 374.17 Ft S & 25 Ft W of NE Cor Lot 1 Th S'yly Par L to E Line Sec 16 250.19 Ft to S'yly line Lot 4, W'yly along S'yly Line Said Lot 4 170.15 Ft, N'yly Par L with E Line Sec 16 437.83 Ft, SE'yly on 373.06 Ft Rad Curve Conv to NE With Long Chord of 253.45 Ft to Beg; Block 248 Orig Plat** to be an unsafe and dangerous building and requested the property owner be ordered to demolish or otherwise make safe the structure; and

WHEREAS, the Building Inspector issued code violation letters on **January 22, 2007, March 30, 2007, January 23, 2008, and July 2, 2008** and requested the property owner properly secure the property and bring it up to code; and

WHEREAS, on **December 4, 2008**, the Lansing Demolition Board held a special meeting to consider and make a recommendation on whether to declare the structure a dangerous building, as defined in the Housing Law of Michigan (MCLA 125.539) and the Lansing Housing and Premises Code (1460.09) to order the property owner to make safe or demolish the structure; and

WHEREAS, the Building Safety Office has determined that compliance with the order of the Lansing Demolition Hearing Board officer has not occurred; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Law of Michigan and the Housing and Premises Code require that a hearing be conducted to give the

property owner an opportunity to show cause why a dangerous structure should not be demolished or otherwise made safe;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lansing City Council hereby schedules a show cause hearing for Monday, **February 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Lansing City Council Chambers, 10th Floor City Hall, 124 W. Michigan, Lansing, Michigan in consideration of the finding and order of the Lansing Demolition Hearing Board Officer regarding the structure at **612 N. Larch St.** to give the owner, or the owner's agent, the opportunity to appear and show cause why the building should not be demolished or otherwise made safe; and to approve, disapprove, or modify the order of the hearing officer to demolish or make safe the subject structure.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Lansing City Council requests that the Manager of Code Compliance notify the owner of said property of the opportunity to appear and present testimony at the hearing, as required by law.

By Councilmember Allen

Motion Carried

RESOLUTION #009

BY COUNCILMEMBER DERRICK QUINNEY
RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANSING

WHEREAS, Olive Eninwanne Chiazor Ikeh was born October 5, 1977 to Dr. Michael and Princess Ukonu Ikeh, in Ann Arbor, Michigan where she and her brothers, Vincent and Richard, were raised; and

WHEREAS, her father earned his PhD from University of Michigan in Aero Space Engineering and her mother graduated from Eastern Michigan University. In 2000, Olive's parents relocated to Nigeria; and

WHEREAS, Olive graduated in 1995 from Canton High School in Canton, Michigan, where she was on the Canton Swim Team and won numerous awards, as well as, participated in the Girl Scouts; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, Olive received her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Michigan where she participated in the African Students Association, and was part of the University's Track and Field Team who were Big Ten Champions from 1996-1999; and

WHEREAS, after graduation, Olive traveled between Lansing, California, and Oregon working various jobs as an Instructor for the Orange County Department of Education in Costa Mesa, California, and the Little Flower Development Center in Portland, Oregon, and at the YMCA and Gold's Gym in Lansing; and

WHEREAS, while attending the Thomas M. Cooley Law School, Olive earned three spots on the Dean's List, the Certificate of Merit for the highest grade in class, was President of the African Legal Scholars Association in 2006, won Moot Court 1st Year Competition, was a member of the International Law Society, and an American Bar Association (ABA) mentor. She graduated with a Juris Doctorate of Law in January 2008; and

WHEREAS, in the spring and summer of 2006, Olive participated in Foreign Study Programs at both the University of Toronto, St. Michael's College of Law, in Canada and the Western Capetown School of Law in South Africa; and

WHEREAS, Olive served as an American Red Cross Volunteer for Motherless Babies in Nnewii, Anambra State Nigeria from 2006-2008, and as President of the African Legal Scholars Association in 2006, educating the Lansing community about issues concerning Africa, and fundraising efforts for "Help Sierra Leone" and the Liberian Book Drive, and participated in a literacy program with Union Missionary Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, as a Legal Intern, she worked for the Daystarr International Recovery House and the Freedom House International in Detroit, Michigan, providing legal aid to immigrants, refugees seeking political asylum, and low income individuals, the Cape Immigration Compass in Capetown, South Africa, and for the Constituency for Africa in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, Olive was a community organizer for Senator Barack Obama's 2008 Presidential campaign and had the distinct honor of introducing President-Elect Barack Obama, on August 4, 2008, in Lansing; and

WHEREAS, Olive loved to travel and to make friends with people all over the world, her strength and kindness inspired those who knew her, encouraging awareness, unity, and a sense of responsibility to our neighbors both locally and globally; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lansing City Council, hereby, wishes to recognize Olive E. Ikeh, J.D. for her many accomplishments, as well as, her dedication to community issues and extend its deepest condolences to her family during this most difficult time. Her family, friends, and those she helped along the way will dearly miss her.

By Councilmember Quinney

Motion Carried

**REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS;
COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS;
AND OTHER CITY RELATED MATTERS**

By Councilmember Robinson that all items be considered as being read in full and that President Quinney make the appropriate referrals

Motion Carried

• Reports from City Officers, Boards and Commissions:

- a. Letters from the Mayor re:
 - i. Sole Source Purchase; Public Service Department/Wastewater Division request for Waterworks Systems & Equipment, Inc. as the vendor for Brooks Partners Bulbs and Ballasts

REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS AND THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

- ii. ACT-19-08; Waverly Golf Course, Easement for roadway drainage and traffic signalization

REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

- iii. Transfer of Funds; State/Federal Programs, MDNR Community Forestry Grant

REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS AND THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

• Communications and Petitions, and Other City Related Matters:

- a. Letter from the United States Department of Treasury, Internal Revenue Service regarding the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act of 2005

REFERRED TO THE CITY ASSESSOR AND REFERRED TO THE

CITY TREASURER AND REFERRED TO THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT AND REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS AND THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

- b. Letter from the State of Michigan Department of Environmental Quality providing notice of the issuance of Permit No. 08-33-0053-P to Community Circle Players to allow for the construction of a 6-foot by 6-foot boardwalk connecting to the Lansing Riverwalk Boardwalk, to be used as a Fire Egress for the Riverwalk Theatre located in the City of Lansing, within the 100-year floodplain/floodway of the Grand River.

REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

- c. Request for Recognition of Non-Profit Status in the City of Lansing submitted by Michael Kildee, President of Michigan Fatherhood Coalition located at 1214 Bement St.

REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL SERVICES AND REFERRED TO THE CITY ATTORNEY

- d. Community Funding Reporting Statement submitted by Edmore Park Neighborhood Association for their participation in the Old Town Dickens Village event held December 6-7, 2008

REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL SERVICES AND RECEIVED AND PLACED ON FILE

- e. Community Funding Reporting Statement submitted by Walnut Neighborhood Organization for their participation in the Old Town Dickens Village event held December 6-7, 2008

REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL SERVICES AND RECEIVED AND PLACED ON FILE

- f. Affidavit of Disclosure submitted by Barbara Hicks of the Principal Shopping District

REFERRED TO THE BOARD OF ETHICS

REMARKS BY COUNCILMEMBERS

REMARKS BY THE MAYOR OR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

COUNCIL PRESIDENT QUINNEY RECESSED THE MEETING AT 5:27 P.M. TO BE RECONVENED AT 7:00 P.M. TO RECEIVE MAYOR BERNERO'S 2009 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

PRESIDENT QUINNEY RECONVENED THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING AT 7:00 P.M. AND INTRODUCED MAYOR BERNERO WHO PRESENTED THE FOLLOWING STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS:



**Mayor Virg Bernero
2009 State of the City Address**

"Lansing Leading the Way"

Information Technology Empowerment Center
Spartan Internet Consulting
January 26, 2009

Thank you President Quinney.

I look forward to working with you and the entire Council to face the challenges and opportunities that will confront us this year. I'm confident that by working diligently -- and by working together -- we can get positive results for the people of Lansing.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for joining me tonight at the Holmes Street School. For more than 80 years this building served the educational needs of Lansing children as a neighborhood elementary school.

Now, thanks to Spartan Internet, one of our City's leading technology companies, this proud old building is getting a new lease on life. And, it is poised to play an exciting new role in preparing our children for the future.

More about that later. For now, I want to thank Spartan CEO Ryan Vartogian for allowing us the privilege of being here tonight.

I want to acknowledge and thank the love of my life, Lansing's First Lady, Teri Bernero. Teri and I are blessed to have with us tonight our lovely daughters, Kelly and Virginia.

Tonight I am pleased to report that even in these times of economic uncertainty, we continue to make significant progress in positioning Lansing and the region for a more prosperous future. The state of our City is good -- and I am optimistic about our future.

Lansing is better prepared than most Michigan cities to emerge from this storm poised for economic growth and opportunity. Over the last three years, with the help of an extraordinary team of dedicated public servants, we have laid a foundation that will pay dividends for Lansing residents for decades to come.

I want to acknowledge and thank the members of my Cabinet and staff and all of our hard-working city employees for everything they do, day in and day out, to move Lansing forward.

Will all of you please rise and be recognized.

Our economic development team deserves special recognition for the amazing accomplishments they have engineered since the start of my Administration. Under the leadership of Bob Trezise, we have leveraged more than \$650 million in new private investments that will create nearly 4,000 new jobs in Lansing.

Bob, will you and your team please take a bow for this incredible achievement.

My friends, with this kind of talent at work, it is no surprise that Lansing is leading the way to a more prosperous future.

In the year ahead, thousands of men and women in the skilled trades will be on the job, right here in Lansing. Brick masons and plumbers, electricians and steel workers: All will be working to transform our historic Ottawa Street Power Station into the new national headquarters of the Accident Fund Insurance Company of America.

They will build the new Capitol Club Tower on Grand Avenue.

And they will create a new entertainment and commerce district along our downtown riverfront, anchored by the \$25 million Market Place project. This transformational project will include a new home for the historic Lansing City Market.

But new development has not been limited to our downtown. Thanks to our economic team, new projects -- and new jobs -- are springing up in every corner of our City.

Once a magnet for crime and drugs, the old Regent Inn on South Cedar will become a NuUnion credit union.

An abandoned building on South Penn just got an extreme makeover and is now the new home of CareerQuest, a leading employment services agency.

And the old Cedar Street School in Old Town will soon be the Old Town Medical Arts Center, with destination retail and a public fitness center.

There is even more good news. Just down the road, our great partners at Michigan State recently scored two major victories for our regional economy.

The \$500 million Facility for Rare Isotope Beams -- or FRIB -- will launch MSU and the Lansing region to the forefront of the most advanced technologies in the world. FRIB will bring more than a billion dollars in spinoff economic activity and hundreds if not thousands of new, high tech jobs.

Joining us tonight are MSU Vice President Steve Webster and Dr. Bradley Sherrill, University Distinguished Professor and Chief Scientist of FRIB. We also have with us some of the MSU students who helped "Bring FRIB to our Crib."

Will all of you please rise to be recognized for this truly spectacular achievement.

The region also will benefit immensely from an exciting new partnership between MSU and IBM that promises to bring as many as 1,500 more new jobs to our community. Some of our regional partners who helped make this happen are with us tonight:

East Lansing Mayor Vic Loomis, LEAP CEO Denyse Ferguson, Lansing Chamber CEO Tim Daman and Vice President Webster, will you please stand and be recognized.

There are few regions in Michigan or even the Midwest who can lay claim to so much new development and so many new jobs in these difficult times. With great partners like these, Lansing is indeed leading the way.

Even as we celebrate these successes, we are cognizant of the historic challenges ahead. Let me assure you: whatever the future brings, we will face our challenges together and head on.

Recently I convened the brightest minds in the Lansing region to assess where we stand today and to develop a roadmap for continued

economic success in these tough times.

Task Force Tomorrow brings together our leading economic, academic and regional government leaders, including the Lansing Chamber, LEAP, Prima Civitas, MSU and LCC. Together, we are charting a course for the future that leverages all of our regional assets and capabilities.

I want to recognize and thank our regional government partners who have joined me in this vital effort and who understand that we are stronger when we stand and work together. My fellow mayor from East Lansing, Vic Loomis, the new supervisor of Delta Township, Ken Fletcher, Lansing Township Supervisor John Daher, and so many others.

I am grateful for your leadership and I look forward to building a stronger region together.

We stand on the shoulders of people like former Delta Supervisor Joe Drolett, former Mayor David Hollister and our brothers and sisters of the United Auto Workers. Because of their leadership, we are indeed fortunate to be the home of two state-of-the-art General Motors assembly plants.

Yet the challenges faced by our hometown car company have never been greater. Just as GM was turning the corner to a leaner, greener future, they were hit hard by the global financial meltdown.

Late last year, when Congress was considering bridge loans for the Big Three, I invited mayors from across the state and nation to form the Mayors and Municipalities Automotive Coalition.

Working together with mayors from Michigan, Texas, Louisiana, Ohio and more, we took our case to the nation's capital. There, we fought for our future, our cities and the millions of American families whose livelihood depends on our domestic auto industry.

I refuse to stand on the sidelines while our car companies and autoworkers are blamed for the sins of Wall Street. We brought the national spotlight right here to Main Street to prove that the most productive autoworkers in the world are building the best cars in the world, right here in Lansing, Michigan.

The real challenge faced by our car companies is not about labor costs, or building the wrong cars. The fact is that we are competing on a global playing field that heavily favors our competitors through subsidies, currency manipulation and lax environmental standards abroad.

I urgently call upon President Obama and the Congress to address the unfair trade practices that have exported our standard of living and undermined our national security. It is an unsustainable race to the bottom and we cannot allow it to go on.

At the Olympics recently held in China, we watched with pride as the Americans brought home the gold again and again. I tell you, when the playing field is level, Americans can compete with anyone, anywhere in the world.

I'm proud to have with me tonight Mike Green, president of UAW Local 652 and Brian Fredline, president of UAW Local 602. They are joined by Randy Thayer, general manager of Lansing Grand River and Lansing Delta, our world-class GM assembly plants.

For you, and for all of our brothers and sisters at GM and the UAW -- current employees and retirees alike -- I want to say thank you: We are with you 100 percent.

Speaking of retirees, I also have my favorite GM retiree with me tonight: Will you please join me in welcoming my Dad, Giulio Bernero.

For my Dad, who worked hard every day to provide us with a modest standard of living, and for thousands of others like him across Lansing and across this country: I will never wave the white flag of surrender. Together, we will make sure that the next generation of cleaner, greener automobiles are built right here in Lansing and exported to the world.

As we work together to build a stronger economic future for the Lansing region, we must also focus on sustainable development that respects and protects our environment.

Our own Board of Water and Light was just recognized by the U.S. EPA as one of the top seven utilities in the entire nation for environmental innovation. This past year, BWL fired up the largest solar array in Michigan and partnered with The Granger Company to turn landfill gas into clean energy that will power thousands of Lansing homes.

But we're not resting on these accomplishments.

Tonight I am pleased to announce the Greater Lansing Green Jobs Alliance, a new partnership that brings together business and labor, education leaders and environmentalists. Working together, we will capitalize on our new President's commitment to creating millions of green collar jobs and make sure that thousands of these jobs are created right here in Lansing.

The Alliance will focus on retraining today's blue collar workers for the green jobs of tomorrow; adopting green building practices that are more energy efficient and environmentally friendly; and attracting green technology companies to the Lansing region in areas like wind, solar, biomass, geothermal and hybrid vehicles.

Please join me in welcoming the co-chairs of the Green Jobs Alliance:

Gavin Gardi is the Sustainable Programs Manager at The Christman Company. He played a key role in creating the first double platinum LEED certified building in the world. The Christman Building, one of the true gems of our downtown, is a masterful combination of historic preservation and state-of-the-art environmental efficiency.

Tim Haggart is the president of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 333. As a key leader in the building trades, Tim will help us lead the way in adopting green building practices across Lansing's construction industry.

And from Lansing Community College, Deborah Cole, Interim Dean for Technical Careers. Dean Cole oversees LCC's nation-leading Alternative Energy Technology program. She and her colleagues at LCC will help us teach the green workers of today and tomorrow the tools and techniques of the new green economy.

I want to express my appreciation to all three of these community leaders for their willingness to serve. When it comes to environmentally sustainable development and green job creation, Lansing, Michigan will lead the way.

As we work to diversify our jobs base into alternative energy and the emerging sectors of the knowledge-based economy, we must ensure that we are creating the workforce of the future right now.

And that leads me to tell you about the amazing things that are about to happen at this old schoolhouse.

Last year we announced an extraordinary public-private partnership that aims to prepare our young people to succeed in the new global economy. With a spark of inspiration from Adam Pitcher of the Holmes Street Neighborhood Association, the ingenuity of Michigan State University, and the community spirit of Spartan Internet, the new Information Technology Empowerment Center -- ITEC -- was born.

In the months ahead, within these very walls, youngsters will be engaged in a multitude of computer-based activities that will put them on track to become the nuclear scientists at FRIB and the network

engineers at IBM.

ITEC will become a national model for leveraging all of this community's assets to secure our children's future as the knowledge workers of tomorrow.

But getting our kids on the right track and keeping them there is a job for all of us. All of us have a direct stake in the success of the next generation, and we are each called upon to do our part.

Would our great former Mayor, David Hollister, Lansing School Board President Hugh Clarke, Jr., School Superintendent Dr. T.C. Wallace, Jr. and LCC President Dr. Brent Knight please come forward. I'd like you to join me for two very exciting announcements in this regard.

First, in the year ahead the City and the school district will work together to create a new mentoring program that will help keep kids on track to finish high school and go on to college. Our goal is to provide a mentor for up to 400 at-risk Lansing students in the next year.

Mayor Hollister has graciously agreed to chair this vital effort, and our Capital Region Big Brothers, Big Sisters will help us get it rolling. I want to say a special thanks to Big Brothers, Big Sisters CEO Ed Hagan, Jr. for agreeing to partner with us on this project.

If you can help mentor a child, please call 372-0160. That's 372-0160. There's a youngster waiting for your help.

Second, to make college education affordable, President Clarke, Dr. Wallace and Dr. Knight will work with me to become one of the first ten Promise Zone communities in Michigan. As a Promise Zone, we will lead the way by building on our successful HOPE Scholars program, pioneered by Mayor Hollister and our Police Chief Mark Alley.

Our goal: two years of tuition-free college for every child in Lansing who completes their high school education.

Thank you, Chief Alley, for all you have done to make our HOPE Scholars program such a success. And thanks to everyone who has supported HOPE with your generous donations.

Let's keep it up -- and step it up -- in the year ahead.

Thanks also to Governor Granholm and our state legislators, especially Senator Gretchen Whitmer and Representative Joan Bauer, for helping us take this incredible leap forward for our kids. This is a remarkable opportunity that we will pursue relentlessly in our quest to make Lansing, Michigan the best city in this state to live, work and raise a family.

Great cities also have great neighborhoods, and we are working harder than ever to make Lansing neighborhoods better than ever. Starting this year we will invest more than \$6 million in federal Neighborhood Stabilization funds to revitalize Lansing neighborhoods that have been hardest hit by the national foreclosure crisis.

In this effort, we will continue to build on our strong partnership with the Ingham County Land Bank and the Greater Lansing Housing Coalition. Together, we will upgrade our housing stock, creating more affordable, quality homes in neighborhoods across the City.

Great neighborhoods are safe neighborhoods, and I am pleased to report that our five new Community Police Officers and our new neighborhood security cameras are paying dividends. Violent crime is down across the City, and sixteen new Neighborhood Watch groups have started in the last year.

When it comes to looking out for your neighbors, Lansing folks are second-to-none.

I am deeply heartened by the capacity of our community to help our brothers and sisters in need. Over the past year, our Human Services Department and the Mid-Michigan Food Bank have delivered nearly 100 tons of food to thousands of Lansing families.

Dr. Joan Jackson Johnson -- we call her Triple J -- will you please stand and take a bow for this wonderful work and for all you do to help the less fortunate in our community.

My Office of Community and Faith-based Initiatives, led by Bishop David Maxwell, recently helped organize the largest one-day food drop in the history of Lansing. More than 2,000 individuals and families received nutritious food in an effort that raised more than \$100,000.

Thanks to all of the pastors, church leaders and believers from across the region who showed what can happen when we put our love in action.

I want to thank especially Pastor Phil Posthuma of Trinity Church, Pastor Larry Trice of Tabernacle of David and Pastor Walter Gibson of Pilgrim Rest for their exemplary work in bringing this effort together. Pastor Gibson is unable to join us tonight, but I would like to ask Pastors Posthuma and Trice to please rise and be recognized.

With the help of our great partners in the faith community, Lansing is indeed leading the way.

But we are not stopping there.

Our efforts to combat the tragedy of foreclosure have helped countless families keep their homes. And our investment of more than \$1.6 million last year helped hundreds of homeless individuals and families find a warm place to sleep and a nourishing hot meal.

In these tough times, your Lansing City Hall has not been standing still, waiting for the storm to pass. We have put our shoulders to the wheel and we are steering a steady course toward a brighter future for all of our residents.

Now more than ever, we must hold true to the basic principles of fiscal responsibility that we have followed for the past three years. As your mayor, I have proposed three consecutive balanced budgets with no tax increases and no use of our reserves.

We must stay on this track, because the decisions are not going to get any easier.

With the rising cost of basic necessities, our citizens simply cannot afford higher taxes.

I am adamant about not asking you for more money in these tough times, even though our costs continue to rise.

Instead, we will continue to reinvent how we provide quality city services, getting more bang for every buck. And we will continue to pursue regional partnerships that eliminate wasteful duplication and deliver basic services at a lower cost to our taxpayers.

As difficult and daunting as the challenges are, things could be much worse. Had my Administration not led the way by tightening our belts and preserving our rainy day fund, we could be in the same boat as many other cities around the state and country: Near bankruptcy, forced to slash vital services like police and fire protection, or raising taxes on residents already burdened by a tough economy.

To avoid such dire straits, my Administration has reduced the size of our city workforce by 20 percent. Yet we have managed to keep every police officer and every firefighter on the job, keeping our city and our citizens safe.

City Hall is full of good people who are working harder, faster and

smarter than ever before. We have reduced our workforce, but we have not reduced the workload on our employees. When folks retire, they are usually not replaced and our remaining employees are working harder than ever to get the job done.

We know that Lansing families are making do with less, and so, too, are we at City Hall. When it comes to leading by example, your city government is leading the way.

My friends, throughout our rich history, Lansing, Michigan has been a city that leads the way: From our birth in the 1840s as Michigan's state capital, to our rise as a global automotive and industrial powerhouse; to our place today as a worldwide leader in education, bioscience, insurance and a growing IT sector -- all while remaining true to our industrial heritage.

Lansing, like our nation, has been home to innovators and entrepreneurs for generations.

As our new President Barack Obama said in his inaugural address last week: "It has been the risk takers, the doers, the makers of things... who have carried us up the long, rugged path towards prosperity and freedom."

Like America's founders, our city's founders refused to accept the status quo. They refused to say that good is good enough. It is this bold and fearless commitment to change and innovation that will continue to serve us best in this period of economic transition.

As we celebrate Lansing's 150th birthday this year, it is time to take stock and build on our strengths. We must do so with the same spirit, the same sturdy resolve as the pioneers who more than a century and a half ago built Michigan's Capital City along the banks of our Grand River.

From the solid foundation of economic growth and job creation we have forged in the past three years, we will build a City that leads the way in advanced technology and alternative energy.

We will lead the way in building better neighborhoods and making sure that every child can succeed in school and in the global economy.

And we will celebrate and respect this community's great diversity, which reminds us all that no matter what the color of our skin, the God of our prayers or the choice of our life partner, we truly are one people.

My fellow citizens, we are stronger together. We sink or swim together, as a neighborhood, as a community and as a region.

And together, with God's blessing, Lansing will continue to lead the way.

Thank you and good night.

ADJOURNED TIME 7:35 P.M.

CHRIS SWOPE, CITY CLERK