

**STATE OF THE CITY OF DAYTON
FEBRUARY 15, 2006**

GOOD EVENING, AND THANK YOU FOR JOINING ME THIS EVENING FOR MY ANNUAL STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS.

THE STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS HAS BEEN GIVEN SINCE MAYOR JIM MCGEE STARTED THIS TRADITION IN 1977. AS THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF DAYTON, I AM PLEASED TO CONTINUE THIS FINE TRADITION OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS.

I WANT TO ESPECIALLY ACKNOWLEDGE MY COLLEAGUES ON THE DAYTON CITY COMMISSION – COMMISSIONER DEAN LOVELACE, COMMISSIONER JOEY WILLIAMS, COMMISSIONER MATT JOSEPH AND COMMISSIONER NAN WHALEY.

NAN WHALEY JOINED THE DAYTON CITY COMMISSION IN HER FIRST RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE. SHE BRINGS ENERGY, EXCITEMENT AND ENTHUSIASM TO THE JOB. AND WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO SEE THE NEW PERSPECTIVE SHE OFFERS. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING ALONG SIDE OF

HER AND MY FELLOW VETERAN COMMISSIONERS AS WE LEAD DAYTON INTO THE FUTURE.

WITH THIS COMMITTED, DEDICATED TEAM OF PUBLIC SERVANTS, I AM CONVINCED WE CAN DO ANYTHING. AND AS I STATED BEFORE, I HAVE MOVED FROM BEING GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS, TO THE FIFTH DIMENSION...UP, UP AND AWAY.

I ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE CITY MANAGER JIM DINNEEN FOR HIS PROFESSIONALISM TO DAYTON. HE AND HIS STAFF HAVE BEEN STEADFAST IN IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY DIRECTION THIS COMMISSION HAS SET FOR THE COMMUNITY.

AND I WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE VARIOUS PARTNERS I SEE IN THE AUDIENCE TONIGHT, INCLUDING FELLOW ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM THROUGHOUT THE REGION, BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS, CITIZENS AND FRIENDS.

AS IT HAS BEEN MY TRADITION EACH YEAR, I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN MY ADDRESS WITH A BRIEF VIDEO. SO LET US TAKE A MOMENT NOW TO REVIEW THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS PAST YEAR.

(VIDEO PRESENTATION)

THANK YOU FOR THAT VISUAL SUMMARY. IT IS ALWAYS REFRESHING TO SEE THE MANY POSITIVE THINGS WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED BY WORKING TOGETHER AS A TEAM. SOMETIMES IN THE MIDST OF THE FOREST YOU FORGET HOW BEAUTIFUL THE TREES ARE.

LAST YEAR AS I STOOD BEFORE YOU, WE WERE MINDFUL THAT IN 2005 WE CELEBRATED THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INCORPORATION OF THE CITY OF DAYTON – FEBRUARY 12, 1805. AT THAT TIME, I PROPOSED A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE TO OUR CITY, BY ASKING CITIZENS TO PUT FORTH AT LEAST 20 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AS A WAY TO SHOW OUR PRIDE AND COMMITMENT TO THIS GREAT CITY.

TODAY, I AM PROUD TO REPORT THAT ALMOST 300 INDIVIDUALS AND 30 ORGANIZATIONS ANSWERED THE CALL AND DONATED OVER 92,000 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AS THEIR BIRTHDAY GIFT TO THE CITY. BASED ON THE LIVING WAGE, THAT AMOUNTS TO AN ALMOST \$1 MILLION DOLLAR DONATION OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY – WHAT A PRESENT TO DAYTON! ON MARCH 2 WE WILL GATHER TO RECOGNIZE THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE MAYOR'S HERITAGE PROGRAM.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE IS THE LIFEblood OF MANY ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS. THEREFORE, GIVEN THE TREMENDOUS SUCCESS OF THE MAYORS HERITAGE PROGRAM DURING OUR BICENTENNIAL YEAR, WE WILL EXTEND THE MAYOR'S HERITAGE PROGRAM FOR ANOTHER YEAR AS WE ENTER THE THIRD CENTURY OF THE CITY OF DAYTON.

FINANCIAL STABILITY: IT IS NO SECRET THAT OUR MAJOR CHALLENGE OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS HAS BEEN FINANCIAL STABILITY. I AM PROUD TO REPORT THAT WE ARE MAKING HEADWAY IN THIS EFFORT. IN FACT, THE CITY OF DAYTON'S TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE EXPERIENCED MODEST GROWTH OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

THIS MODEST INCREASE, COUPLED WITH CONTINUED BELT-TIGHTENING MEASURES BY ALL CITY DEPARTMENTS, ENABLED US TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT LEVEL OF OUR EMERGENCY CASH RESERVE FUND AND TO FINISH THE YEAR WITHIN BUDGET. WE WERE ABLE TO MAKE MODEST INVESTMENTS IN CAPITAL EQUIPMENT. WE INVESTED MORE THAN \$5.5 MILLION IN UPGRADING OUR OUTDATED EQUIPMENT. WE WERE ABLE TO INVEST IN PURCHASING NEW POLICE VEHICLES, MOBILE DATA TERMINALS FOR POLICE CRUISERS, A NEW LADDER TRUCK IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, A NEW WASTE COLLECTION TRUCK, AND VARIOUS OTHER REPLACEMENT VEHICLES. THIS REPRESENTS OUR HIGHEST LEVEL OF INVESTMENT FOR

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT IN 10 YEARS. IN 2006, WE NEED TO CONTINUE OUR INVESTMENT IN CAPITAL.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: I AM PLEASED WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS WE HAVE WITNESSED RECENTLY. THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD FRIGIDAIRE PLANT INTO A "TECH TOWN" CAMPUS FOR TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES IS MAKING GREAT STRIDES. TO DATE, THE CITY HAS RECEIVED NEARLY \$13 MILLION IN OUTSIDE FUNDING TO HELP REDEVELOP THE SITE. LAST YEAR WE INITIATED PHASE ONE DEMOLITION WORK AND BEGAN THE PROCESS TO RECRUIT BUSINESSES TO THE SITE. EARLIER THIS MONTH, WE APPROVED A \$925,000 CONTRACT TO CONDUCT ADDITIONAL BELOW-GROUND DEMOLITION. OTHER PROGRESS WE EXPECT TO SEE AT THE SITE DURING 2006 INCLUDES ASBESTOS REMOVAL, LANDSCAPING, AND THE START OF PHASE TWO DEMOLITION WORK.

THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE IN TECH TOWN COULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED WITHOUT THE COLLABORATION,

COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP OF MANY PLAYERS. IN PARTICULAR, I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE CONGRESSMAN MIKE TURNER, OUR CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, AND THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY ED/GE OFFICE. WITHOUT THEIR CONTINUED ASSISTANCE, WE COULD NOT HAVE ACHIEVED THIS LEVEL OF SUCCESS.

IN RELATED EFFORTS, WE ARE ALSO MOVING FORWARD WITH REDEVELOPING OTHER BROWNFIELD SITES FOR FUTURE BUSINESS RE-USE, INCLUDING THE NIBCO PROPERTY, THE FORMER MCCALL'S PRINTING PLANT SITE, AND THE OLD GH&R FOUNDRY. IN FACT, OUR BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS EARNED DAYTON A "CITY LIVABILITY AWARD" FROM THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS.

WE ALSO COMPLETED OUR FIRST JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AGREEMENT. THE JEDD AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE CITY OF DAYTON AND MIAMI TOWNSHIP WILL FOSTER MUTUAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS

FOR BOTH OF OUR COMMUNITIES. THIS CITY COMMISSION HAS DIRECTED STAFF TO EXPLORE ADDITIONAL JEDD OPPORTUNITIES AS PART OF OUR REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.

THE CITY IS COMMITTED TO CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT WILL NOT ONLY GROW CURRENT BUSINESSES BUT WILL ATTRACT NEW BUSINESSES AND JOBS TO THE AREA. I WISH TO HIGHLIGHT JUST A COUPLE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUCCESSES THAT SYMBOLIZE OUR EFFORTS TO CREATE AND RETAIN JOBS IN DAYTON.

THE COMMUNITY BLOOD CENTER HAS COMPLETED ITS \$7 MILLION EXPANSION AND RENOVATION PROJECT DOWNTOWN. THE CITY OF DAYTON CONTRIBUTED \$100,000 THROUGH A CDBG GRANT THAT HELPED THE COMPANY EXPAND ITS FACILITY AND SERVICES, AND RETAIN 400 VALUABLE JOBS.

I ALSO WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE SOS METALS COMPANY, WHICH IS THE FIRST BUSINESS TO RE-LOCATE TO THE FORMER MCCALLS FACILITY SITE. IN 2002 MOST OF THE ABANDONED PRINTING PLANT WAS DEMOLISHED. IN EARLY 2005, THE CITY OF DAYTON AND SOS METALS REACHED AGREEMENT FOR THE COMPANY TO OCCUPY THE 345,000-SQUARE-FOOT BUILDING FOR USE AS A STEEL PROCESSING PLANT. THE COMPANY PLANS TO CREATE MORE THAN 50 JOBS. WE ARE ALSO MOVING FORWARD WITH PLANS TO ACQUIRE OTHER NEARBY ABANDONED PROPERTIES TO FURTHER ENHANCE THE REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF THE SITE.

OUR AIRPORT IS ALSO WORKING HARD TO STIMULATE JOB GROWTH. WE RECENTLY LANDED ANOTHER NEW COMMERCIAL AIR CARRIER – FRONTIER AIRLINES. FRONTIER AIRLINES HAS STARTED NEW NON-STOP AIR SERVICE FROM THE DAYTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO ITS HUB OPERATION IN DENVER, COLORADO. THE ADDITION OF THESE NEW FLIGHTS NOT ONLY ADDED 12 JOBS AT THE

DAYTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, IT AUGMENTS DAYTON'S POSITION AS THE PREFERRED DEPARTURE POINT FOR REGIONAL AIR TRAVELERS.

WHILE OUR JOB RETENTION AND CREATION EFFORTS ARE STRONG, WE CERTAINLY HAVE CHALLENGES AHEAD. TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT BY MEADWESTVACO TO REALIGN SOME OF ITS DIVISIONS AND CONDENSE ITS EMPLOYMENT BASE ILLUSTRATES THE HURDLES WE CONTINUE TO FACE AS A REGION. DESPITE OUR EXTENSIVE EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE MEADWESTVACO TO MAINTAIN LOCAL JOB LEVELS, THEY ULTIMATELY MADE A BUSINESS DECISION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A VERY COMPETITIVE INDUSTRY. THEIR ANNOUNCEMENT IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE CORPORATE CONSOLIDATION THAT HAS BEEN UNDERWAY NATIONWIDE OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS. WHILE WE ARE CERTAINLY DISAPPOINTED WITH TODAY'S NEWS, I AM CONFIDENT WE, AS A REGION, DID ALL WE COULD TO SWAY

THEIR DECISION IN OUR FAVOR. AND YET OTHER CHALLENGES STILL REMAIN.

THE POTENTIAL LOSS OF JOBS AT AREA DELPHI PLANTS, THE GENERAL EFFECTS OF COST-CUTTING BY GENERAL MOTORS AND FORD, AND THE CLOSE OF THE UPS OPERATION AT THE DAYTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ALL POSE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES FOR DAYTON AND THE SURROUNDING REGION. I AM HOPEFUL THAT THE TAX SHARING AGREEMENT THE CITY OF DAYTON RECENTLY SIGNED WITH MONTGOMERY COUNTY, KETTERING, VANDALIA AND MORaine WILL BEAR FRUIT IN HELPING TO RETAIN REGIONAL DELPHI JOBS. NEVERTHELESS, WE MUST BE PREPARED TO MANAGE ANY FALLOUT FROM THESE POTENTIAL LOSSES. I KNOW OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM IS WORKING IN CONCERT WITH OTHER REGIONAL PARTNERS TO DO WHAT THEY CAN TO HELP PROTECT THESE JOBS AND CREATE NEW ONES AS WELL. I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO STAND BEFORE YOU AT THIS TIME NEXT YEAR AND SAY WE WERE ABLE TO AVOID ANY DIRECT HITS. REGARDLESS, WE WILL FORGE AHEAD WITH

AGGRESSIVE, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION EFFORTS, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE INVESTMENTS THAT PERPETUATE OUR TRANSITION TO A TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICE-BASED ECONOMY.

COMMUNITY SAFETY: THANKS TO A NUMBER OF NEW PROGRAMS AND NEW PARTNERSHIPS, THE CITY OF DAYTON CONTINUES TO SEE PROGRESS IN THE AREA OF COMMUNITY SAFETY. OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, OVERALL CRIME HAS DECREASED BY 25 PERCENT.

WHILE WE MIGHT BE LAUDED FOR OUR SUCCESS OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, WE CERTAINLY CANNOT REST ON OUR EFFORTS. A COMMUNITY THAT ACCEPTS ONE CRIME AS A WAY OF LIFE ACCEPTS ONE CRIME TOO MANY. THE CITY AND THE COURTS MUST HAVE ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CRIMES IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS. AND AS A REGION WE MUST ADDRESS THE ISSUES THAT MAKE OUR JAILS A REVOLVING DOOR WHICH PUTS CRIMINALS BACK ON THE STREET.

GUN CRIMES IN DAYTON CONTINUE TO DECLINE, ACCORDING TO RESULTS ANNOUNCED BY THE U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE. LOCAL OFFICIALS CREDIT THE TREND TO CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP EFFORTS BETWEEN LOCAL, COUNTY, AND FEDERAL AGENCIES TO HELP KEEP GUNS OFF DAYTON'S STREETS, OFFENDERS WITH VIOLENT CRIME HISTORIES ARE NOW DRAWING LONGER SENTENCES THROUGH FEDERAL COURT THAN THROUGH THE STATE COURT.

WE ALSO ENTERED INTO A UNIQUE REGIONAL CRIME-FIGHTING EFFORT WITH SURROUNDING CITIES. REGIONAL COMMUNITIES CAN NOW TAP INTO A CENTRAL DATABASE AND ENTER INFORMATION THAT WILL HELP TRACK SUSPECTS AND SOLVE CRIMES MORE QUICKLY. USE OF THE NEW SYSTEM HELPS POLICE OFFICERS NARROW THEIR INVESTIGATIONS AND TRACK DOWN CRIMINALS QUICKER. INFORMATION THAT COULD LEAD POLICE OFFICERS TO A PRIME SUSPECT IS NOW JUST A MOUSE CLICK AWAY. AS WE LOOK TO THE FUTURE, MORE OF THESE CREATIVE

VENTURES IN REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WILL BE THE KEY AS WE DELIVER THESE CRITICAL SERVICES.

I AM PLEASED TO NOTE THAT A CLASS OF NEW POLICE OFFICER RECRUITS HAS BEGUN. A TEST TO HIRE 25 ADDITIONAL POLICE RECRUITS IS SCHEDULED TO BE GIVEN IN MARCH, WITH A NEW ACADEMY TRAINING CLASS SET TO BEGIN THIS SUMMER. IN ADDITION, A CLASS OF 20 PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTER RECRUITS WILL BEGIN TRAINING LATER THIS MONTH. THE RECRUITS ARE EXPECTED TO GRADUATE AND JOIN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BY EARLY SUMMER.

AS WE WORK TO HIRE MORE SAFETY PERSONNEL, OUR CHALLENGE REMAINS TO INCREASE MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS. WE ARE COMMITTED TO ENHANCING OUR MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT EFFORTS TO ATTRACT MINORITY AND FEMALE CANDIDATES WHO CAN JOIN THE RANKS OF OUR SAFETY FORCES. FOR THIS YEAR, WE HAVE ALLOCATED AN

ADDITIONAL \$50,000 TO ASSIST THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IN ITS DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT EFFORTS.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT: DAYTON CAN BE PROUD OF THE MANY ON-GOING COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROJECTS TAKING PLACE IN OUR CITY. THE PHOENIX PROJECT, A JOINT EFFORT BETWEEN THE CITY OF DAYTON, GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL, PREMIER HEALTH PARTNERS AND CITYWIDE DEVELOPEMNT CORPORATION, HAS BEEN STEADILY EVOLVING THE PAST FEW YEARS, AND WE EXPECT TO SEE MORE TANGIBLE DEVELOPMENTS THIS YEAR. IN ADDITION TO COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION ALONG SALEM AVENUE, THE PHOENIX PROJECT GOALS INCLUDE EXPANDING HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS, AND STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY'S CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE. RECENT EFFORTS INCLUDE ASSISTING YOUTH IN THE AREA WITH FINDING JOBS AND ENGAGING IN POSITIVE LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES. IN ADDITION, COMMUNITY BASED POLICE OFFICERS ASSIGNED TO THE

AREA HAVE HELPED REDUCE MAJOR CRIME INCIDENTS BY 24 PERCENT. JUST AS THE MODEL FOR THIS KIND OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WORKED WITH THE GENESIS PROJECT AROUND MIAMI VALLEY HOSPITAL, WE HOPE TO SEE PROGRESS ON SIMILAR EFFORTS NEAR GRANDVIEW HOSPITAL AND CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER THIS YEAR.

ANOTHER MAJOR PROJECT TAKING SHAPE INVOLVES THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON'S EFFORTS TO REDEVELOP 49 ACRES OF FORMER NCR PROPERTY NEAR THE UD CAMPUS ALONG BROWN AND STEWART STREETS. WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT HOW THAT AREA CAN COMPLEMENT THE ACTIVITY ALREADY OCCURRING ALONG THE BROWN STREET BUSINESS CORRIDOR AND IN THE SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD.

THESE LARGE-SCALE COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PROJECTS ARE BEING SUPPORTED BY A VARIETY OF OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS. FOR EXAMPLE, WE CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE "HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE."

OUR AGGRESSIVE DEMOLITION POLICY FOR VACANT AND NUISANCE PROPERTIES RESULTED IN 180 NUISANCE STRUCTURES BEING REMOVED FROM OUR CITY LAST YEAR. AND WE ARE NOT LETTING UP. FOR 2006 WE ARE TARGETING THE DEMOLITION OF 300 MORE NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY EYESORES.

WE ALSO CONTINUE TO GO AFTER NEGLIGENT PROPERTY OWNERS. WE IMPLEMENTED OUR "SHAMING SIGN" PROGRAM TO PUT ADDITIONAL PUBLIC PRESSURE ON CARELESS PROPERTY OWNERS WHO LEAVE THEIR BUILDINGS UNATTENDED. OUR STEPPED-UP CODE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS CLAIMED ANOTHER VICTORY RECENTLY WHEN A MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE HELD A BUSINESS OWNER IN CONTEMPT FOR FAILING TO CLEAN UP HER PROPERTY. THE COURT'S PENALTIES INCLUDED THREE DAYS IN JAIL AND A FINE.

WE DEVELOPED 131 MARKET RATE HOUSES IN 2005 AND REHABILITATED SIX UNITS FOR SALE. 421 CITIZENS COMPLETED THE MORTGAGE CREDIT COUNSELING PROGRAM TO ASSIST THEM IN PURCHASING NEW HOMES.

THE NEWLY CREATED "ORION SOLUTION" IS NOW BEING ROLLED OUT IN TARGETED NEIGHBORHOODS. THE PROGRAM TARGETS VARIOUS CITY RESOURCES IN NEIGHBORHOODS MOST AFFECTED BY NEGATIVE QUALITY-OF-LIFE ISSUES, SUCH AS CRIME, HOUSING VIOLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS. THIS CONCENTRATED APPROACH WILL HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN MAKING REAL CHANGES IN OUR MOST VULNERABLE NEIGHBORHOODS.

QUALITY OF LIFE: I WANT TO RECOGNIZE COMMISSIONERS LOVELACE AND WILLIAMS FOR THEIR CONTINUING EFFORTS TO FACILITATE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT. AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE YOUTH ANTI-VIOLENCE SEMINAR THEY INITIATED LAST YEAR, WE SPECIFICALLY CARVED OUT FUNDING IN THIS

YEAR'S BUDGET TO BEGIN IMPLEMENTING SOME OF THE VARIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS THAT EMERGED FROM THAT EVENT. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEMS IS THE CREATION OF THE DAYTON COMMISSION ON YOUTH.

THIS YEAR WE HELD THE MAYOR'S SHOWCASE TO HIGHLIGHT THE MANY TALENTED YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO ARE DOING POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE THINGS.

JUST AS IMPORTANT, WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES SERVING THE GREATER DAYTON REGION TO MAKE SURE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT REMAINS A LONG-TERM PRIORITY FOR US.

I AM ALSO ONCE AGAIN IMPLEMENTING THE "MAYOR'S READING CHALLENGE" TO SUPPORT LITERACY EFFORTS IN THE COMMUNITY. RECENTLY, THE DAYTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS CONDUCTED ITS ANNUAL "READING JAMBOREE" TO ENTICE MORE CHILDREN INTO THE WORLD OF BOOKS. I WANT TO DO MY PART ONCE AGAIN BY RECOGNIZING SCHOOL-AGE

CHILDREN WHO READ BETWEEN 25 AND 75 BOOKS, DEPENDING ON THEIR AGE GROUP. STUDENTS IN ANY PUBLIC, PRIVATE OR CHARTER SCHOOL IN THE CITY WHO READ THE PRESCRIBED NUMBER OF BOOKS WILL RECEIVE CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT FROM THE DAYTON CITY COMMISSION. THIS IS JUST ANOTHER WAY THE CITY OF DAYTON AND THE LOCAL SCHOOLS CAN WORK TOGETHER TO ENHANCE LITERACY SKILLS AMONG OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

WE CONTINUE A STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DAYTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS. THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SCHOOL FACILITIES IN OUR COMMUNITY ARE MAJOR INVESTMENTS IN OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE, AND THEY ARE SUPPORTING DAYTON'S OWN NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION EFFORTS AT THE SAME TIME.

AT THE CLOSE OF LAST YEAR, WE PRESENTED THE DAYTON SCHOOL BOARD WITH A CHECK FOR MORE THAN \$552,000 FOR MONEY COLLECTED THROUGH THE 2005 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TAX SHARING PROGRAM. THE FUNDS WE

COLLECTED THROUGH OUR TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAMS WILL CERTAINLY HELP THE SCHOOL SYSTEM WITH ITS ONGOING EFFORTS TO PROVIDE FIRST-RATE PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

THIS PAST DECEMBER, WE ONCE AGAIN HOSTED THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DURING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DAYTON PEACE ACCORDS. COMMISSIONER MATT JOSEPH WAS VERY INSTRUMENTAL IN ORGANIZING THIS REMARKABLE CELEBRATION, WHICH REMINDED THE WORLD WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH PATIENCE, DIPLOMACY AND UNITY.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL: AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, WE ARE NOT IN THIS ALONE AND WE MUST USE OUR RELATIONSHIPS AT THE STATE LEVEL TO ASSIST IN THE VIABILITY OF DAYTON. WE WERE SUCCESSFUL IN RETAINING OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUND AND WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO PROMOTE THE CITY OF DAYTON. IN THAT CONTEXT, I AM CALLING UPON THE STATE

LEGISLATURE TO ADOPT A REAL URBAN POLICY THAT CALLS FOR THE RE-BIRTH OF URBAN CENTERS, RATHER THAN CONTINUING TO TIE THE HANDS OF THE GREAT CITIES OF OUR STATE.

IN 1912, THE PEOPLE OF OHIO RECOGNIZED THE WISDOM OF LOCAL DECISIONS BEING MADE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. AS A RESULT, THEY ADOPTED AN AMENDMENT TO THE OHIO CONSTITUTION GRANTING MUNICIPALITIES THE RIGHT TO EXERCISE ALL POWERS OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO DEFEND THESE HOME RULE POWERS AGAINST UNWANTED ATTACK.

THE LEGISLATION CHALLENGING OUR RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT IN THE DAYTON CITY CHARTER ATTACKS THE VERY CORE OF HOME RULE. IT INVADES AND ATTEMPTS TO NULLIFY THE RIGHT OF LOCAL VOTERS TO DETERMINE WHO WILL SERVE THEM. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS SHOULD SET RULES ON LOCAL ISSUES, AND STATE GOVERNMENT SHOULD SET RULES ON STATE ISSUES. THE RESIDENCY OF DAYTON

EMPLOYEES IS A UNIQUE LOCAL ISSUE. THE VOTERS OF DAYTON HAVE SPOKEN. WE BELIEVE THAT THEIR VOICES WILL BE HEARD BY THE OHIO SUPREME COURT.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THOSE WHO TALK ABOUT GIVING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS, TO PRACTICE WHAT THEY PREACH!

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK COMMISSIONER LOVELACE AS HE CONTINUES TO WORK ON BEHALF OF DAYTON RESIDENTS WHO ARE POTENTIAL PREY FOR PREDATORY LENDERS. HIS EFFORTS CONTINUE TO SHINE A BRIGHT LIGHT ON THE ILLEGAL AND UNETHICAL PRACTICES OF LENDERS WHO CALLOUSLY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THOSE WHO CAN LEAST AFFORD TO LOSE THEIR HOMES OR THEIR SAVINGS. WE ARE PLEASED TO SEE A BI-PARTISAN COALITION ANNOUNCE A BILL TO STOP THE HORRID PRACTICE OF PREDATORY LENDING. I URGE OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO SUPPORT THIS LEGISLATION AND MAKE IT A PRIORITY ON THE AGENDA FOR THIS SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS, THE CITY COMMISSION AND THE COMMUNITY HAS TWO IMPORTANT ISSUES CONFRONTING US.

FIRST OF ALL, WITH THE DEPARTURE OF CITY MANAGER JIM DINNEEN, WE HAVE BEGUN THE PROCESS OF HIRING A NEW CITY MANAGER. ON BEHALF OF MY COLLEAGUES, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE MR. DINNEEN FOR HIS HARD WORK AND DEDICATION DURING SOME VERY CHALLENGING TIMES. HE HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING DAYTON ADDRESS RECENT FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES WITHOUT RESORTING TO DRASTIC MEASURES. WE CERTAINLY ACKNOWLEDGE HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELPING DAYTON MAINTAIN FINANCIAL STABILITY AND STRONG CITY SERVICES. WE WISH HIM WELL IN HIS NEW ENDEAVORS.

THIS COMMISSION IS FULLY ENGAGED IN THE PROCESS OF SELECTING A NEW CITY MANAGER WHO WILL CONTINUE THE MOMENTUM WE NOW HAVE UNDERWAY. I FULLY EXPECT TO

COMPLETE OUR SEARCH PROCESS THIS SPRING AND HAVE A NEW CITY MANAGER IN PLACE THIS SUMMER.

SECONDLY, A KEY TO OUR FUTURE FINANCIAL STABILITY DEPENDS UPON THE RENEWAL OF THE EXISTING EARNINGS TAX RATE. ON MARCH 14TH, DAYTON VOTERS WILL BE ASKED TO CONTINUE THE ONE HALF PERCENT RENEWABLE PORTION OF THE CITY'S 2.25 PERCENT EARNINGS TAX, WHICH HAS BEEN IN EFFECT SINCE 1984. THE VOTE WILL RENEW THE HALF-PERCENT PORTION THROUGH 2014, WHICH MEANS THE CITY WILL HAVE MAINTAINED THE SAME TAX RATE FOR 30 YEARS – A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT.

THE HALF-PERCENT FIGURE ACCOUNTS FOR MORE THAN \$25 MILLION A YEAR, AND HELPS PAY FOR SUCH BASIC SERVICES AS POLICE, FIRE, EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, WASTE COLLECTION, STREET REPAIR, SNOW REMOVAL, AND RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS. IN ADDITION, PASSING THE TAX RENEWAL MEANS THAT THE \$50.00 A YEAR PROPERTY TAX

CREDIT WILL BE EXTENDED FOR SENIOR AND DISABLED PROPERTY OWNERS.

AS RESIDENTS CONSIDER THEIR VOTE, I ASK THEM TO REMEMBER HOW THEIR TAX DOLLARS HAVE BEEN USED OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CITY HAS INVESTED MORE THAN \$35.5 MILLION IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB RETENTION & EXPANSION EFFORTS. THIS INCLUDES REDEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD GH&R FOUNDRY BROWNFIELD SITE, SUPPORTING NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, AND ASSISTING DAYTON BUSINESSES THROUGH THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY ED/GE PROGRAM.

DAYTON HAS ALSO INVESTED MORE THAN \$65 MILLION, OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS IN PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY. THESE EFFORTS INCLUDE MAJOR ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS THE CITY.

IN ADDITION, NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TOTALED APPROXIMATELY \$16 MILLION. THIS INCLUDED VARIOUS STREETScape AND AMENITY REPAIRS, AND FUNDING FOR MANY HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROJECTS. MOREOVER, OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, WE PURCHASED NEW PUBLIC WORKS EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING 20 NEW WASTE COLLECTION TRUCKS, THREE NEW STREET SWEEPERS AND 14 NEW DE-ICING TRUCKS.

I AM URGING ALL DAYTON RESIDENTS TO VOTE ON MARCH 14TH TO KEEP OUR BASIC SERVICES STRONG, OUR NEIGHBORHOODS STABLE, AND OUR SENIOR TAX CREDIT IN PLACE. THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY DEPENDS ON IT.

FOUR WEEKS AGO I STOOD ON THE STEPS OF THE NEWLY RENOVATED MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE AND MARVELED AT THE CROWD WHICH GATHERED AT THIRD AND MAIN TO RECOGNIZE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING.

OUT IN THE CROWD THERE WAS VIRTUALLY EVERY ETHNIC GROUP REPRESENTED IN THE GREATER DAYTON AREA; THERE WERE INNER CITY RESIDENTS AND SUBURBANITES; THERE WERE CHRISTIANS, JEWS AND MUSLIMS; THERE WERE TODDLERS AND SENIOR CITIZENS. THEY HAD ALL COME TOGETHER IN THE HEART OF THE REGION AND THE HEART OF THE CITY.

I WAS IMMEDIATELY STRUCK WITH HOW FAR WE HAVE COME AND YET HOW FAR WE HAVE TO GO.

WE STILL STRUGGLE WITH THE GAP BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY, WE STILL DEAL WITH THE EVER EXPANDING GAP BETWEEN THE HAVE'S AND THE HAVE NOTS.

RICHARD FLORIDA, AUTHOR OF *THE RISE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS*, HAS ENGAGED URBAN THINKERS AND ENGAGED OUR COMMUNITY WHEN HE SPOKE HERE. HE SPOKE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CREATIVE CLASS TO URBAN COMMUNITIES. HE SPOKE OF THE DYNAMIC NATURE OF THE

CREATIVE CLASS WHICH PROMPTS THEM TO SEEK NOT ONLY FULFILLING JOBS, BUT ALSO TO SEEK TOLERANT AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES.

AFTER THE LAST MAYOR'S RACE, MY OPPONENT WROTE A PIECE IN THE DAYTON DAILY NEWS ABOUT THE UNDERLYING NATURE OF RACE IN THE MAYOR'S CAMPAIGN. IT WAS THERE. IT WAS THERE NOT BECAUSE EITHER ONE OF US PUT IT IN THE CAMPAIGN. BUT BECAUSE IT IS AN UNDERLYING SORE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

IF WE AS A REGION ARE GOING TO MOVE FORWARD, WE MUST BEGIN TO ADDRESS THE REAL THREAT OF ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE IN OUR COMMUNITY. THE EFFORTS OF JUDGE WALTER RICE AND JUDGE ADELE RILEY, WITH THE DIALOGUE ON RACE IS A MAJOR STEP. THE WORK OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF COMMUNITY AND JUSTICE IS A STEP. THE WORK OF MANY CHURCHES AND CIVIC GROUPS IS A STEP.

BUT, TODAY, AS WE MOVE FORWARD I CALL UPON ALL CITIZENS TO COME TOGETHER, AS WE DID AFTER THE FLOOD IN 1913, AND MOVE DAYTON, OHIO AND THE GREATER DAYTON AREA TO A COMMUNITY THAT EMBRACES OUR DIFFERENCES AND CELEBRATES THEM.

THE CITY CAN ONLY BE AS GOOD AS THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN IT. THE REGION CAN ONLY BE AS GOOD AS THE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN IT. THANK YOU ALL FOR ATTENDING THIS EVENING. AND KEEP BELIEVING!

MAY GOD BLESS DAYTON, GOD BLESS THE REGION AND GOD BLESS AMERICA.