

STATE OF THE CITY 2017

President Viscelli, members of the Council, citizens of the City of Rome, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 2017 State of the City presentation and our beautifully renovated MVCC campus. This campus is truly a gem in our city, and I would like to thank Rome Campus Dean Franca Armstrong and her staff for welcoming us so graciously to the campus.

Please also join me in welcoming our guests: Representing Senator Griffo's office is Brian Adey, representing Assemblyman Brindisi is Sarah Bormann, Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente, Chairman of the Board of Legislators Jerry Fiorini, representing Mayor Palmieri is his Chief of Staff Sonny Greco, Sheriff Rob Maciol, representing Eastern Air Defense Sector Canadian Detachment Col Bruce McLean.

It is truly an honor to represent the City of Rome. Over the past 15 months, we have visited with so many different people, some inquiring about business potential in our city, others connected to organizations who provide much needed services to our citizens, nonprofit organizations who take on the very difficult task of fundraising for many, many worthy causes throughout the community. All of these people have one goal in mind to help make Rome the best city it can be. For all of you, my sincere thanks for taking the time to give back and help the community to grow and prosper.

Upon taking office last January, it is no secret that I felt the City needed to increase its presence in the area of economic and community development. Thus, the Administration adopted a focus of laying the foundation to begin efforts to reengage ourselves with our economic and community development partners throughout the region and the State. In developing our strategy to position Rome as a great place to live and do business, we began to identify potential projects that would require the help of outside funding sources to make our City "shovel ready" for development.

Our goal has always been to work across the City so that improvements will be made east to west and north to south. To our west, we saw a commercial/residential area of the City that had long been ignored for any type of development dollars beginning on the 400 block of W. Dominick Street. During an afternoon walk along this corridor, our planners began the process of creating the W. Dominick Street Smart Walk program. The vision for the project was born from the Rome Comprehensive Plan and further progressed through the Urban Design plan, and the Erie Boulevard Brownfield Opportunity Area plan. The vision included a project that would begin in the 300 block of W. Dominick Street better connecting this block to our downtown Arts Corridor with sidewalk improvements, sidewalk art, and connectivity improvements. Further west from the corner of Madison Street to Expense Street we further envisioned commercial and residential façade improvements along with an aggressive sidewalk program and continued street improvements. Taking the lead on this project from our Department of Community and Economic Development were planners Matt Andrews, Diana Samuels, and Kiva VanDergeest. They collaborated on writing a Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) to the State last year and we were awarded \$640,000 to begin this initiative on the west side of our City. Equally, our Community

Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) stepped up with \$100,000 dedicated to commercial/residential façade improvement and another \$400,000 of CDBG facilities funding toward sidewalk replacement. This year will include the public engagement and design phase for the 300 block, and the 400-600 block CDBG sidewalk project will be advertised for bid within the next few months.

Continuing on our west side, our second Brownfield Opportunity Area Initiative (BOA) commenced last fall. Led by our consultant, Bergmann Associates, this BOA will focus primarily on the west side of the City and the Erie Blvd corridor. This opens funding opportunities for brownfield cleanup projects as well as possible tax credits for redevelopment projects within the designated planning area. With this in mind, we quickly identified the dilapidated Rome Cable site as an eyesore that must be remediated and the remaining structures torn down to open the area for redevelopment. We are working closely with the Rome Industrial Development Corporation, our Mohawk Valley Regional Council representatives, Mohawk Valley EDGE and Empire State Development Corporation to find the necessary funding to assist us in this endeavor.

The City is continuing water expansion efforts to our west along W. Thomas Street, and private sector development is also taking place on the west side with a Fastrac Café quickly taking shape on Route 69 along with a \$1.5 million expansion at NYE Volkswagen, a \$650,000 investment by Nortek Powder Coating in the West Rome Industrial Park, a new drive up grocery with pickup stations at the WalMart SuperCenter for a total investment at WalMart of over \$800,000 in 2016 and 2017.

Moving toward the City center or downtown area work continues on the Brown to Green Revitalization Strategy for Downtown Rome, the Downtown Rome BOA being among the first twelve BOAs to be approved and certified by the NYS Legislature. In conjunction with EDGE, we are beginning conversations with Erie Blvd commercial building owners to kick off a new round of façade improvements to encompass properties facing Erie Blvd. This is our most heavily traveled roadway on a daily basis, and commercial façade improvements will provide a new and welcoming streetscape effect to our City center.

Along the City center route and continuing in our BOA, we identified our next project as the former Rome Turney Radiator site. This approximately 3 acre site holds tremendous promise on our entry gateway with its proximity to the downtown area as a parcel where multiple reuse strategies could possibly be implemented. Again, working with our partners at MV EDGE our planners wrote a grant proposal for some additional funding to assist in cleaning and remediating this site. In late fall we were awarded a \$500,000 RESTORE NY grant coupled with an existing \$200,000 EPA cleanup grant and some possible funding from National Grid. With these grant funds in hand, developers have taken notice of the potential for a redevelopment project at the Rome Turney Radiator site. Because of the interest already expressed in this site, we will soon be releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) from interested parties to present to us their plans for the rehabilitation of this site.

The City renewed its relationship with the Rome Main Streets Alliance early last year as they reconstituted their board and executive leadership. Main Streets is an important economic development partner especially in assisting with enhancement of our corridors. All of us took great effort to present the City as a very welcoming place to live and do business through our efforts with beautification activities, and Main Streets along with Rome Clean and Green was a big part of that success. With Main Streets assisting our Public Works staff to beautify our corridors with plantings and slum and blight remediation, Rome Clean and Green assisted Public Works and our trash collector Bliss Environmental Services to

catalogue our garbage routes, assist with recycling education efforts, and help with litter prevention initiatives. In a city this size, it takes the hard work of employees and volunteers alike, and we applaud those organizations for their willingness to assist us.

The time has come to address the aging of the N. George Street parking garage. This facility has been allowed to fall into a state of disrepair which will require it to come down opening the corner to new possibilities to include some element of public parking. In the coming months, we will seek out partners willing to possibly invest in reuse strategies on that corner.

Private sector investment is also taking place in the downtown area with Freedom Plaza having just finished a build out of the former Staples space to make way for three new businesses downtown. We have just recently met with the complex's marketing representative to discuss strategies to further fill this plaza. Aldi's has commenced an approximately \$900,000 improvement project on the front of their store building. We have met with all the real estate representatives in the downtown area and are exploring options with them to help fill their commercial buildings.

The Capitol Theater will host over 1100 events this year between the main theater and two smaller theaters. They have created nighttime activity that has been missing on W. Dominick Street for some time. We applaud their efforts and are hoping to assist the Theater as they explore other uses for their remaining commercial space. They are an integral component of any downtown revitalization initiative. The REACH Center has also made steady physical improvements and has quickly filled their W. Dominick street space. We hope to assist them to identify funding sources to begin renovating their almost 14,000 square feet of space facing Erie Blvd.

We are awaiting confirmation of another Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) competition. Last year, we presented a very competitive plan in our six county region. We are already working on our strategy for this year's \$10 million competition and will be entering the City of Rome into the DRI.

Aligning with this is EDGE's continuing partnership with the City in the areas of industrial, mixed use, and infrastructure development in East Rome, the Waterfront and Fort Stanwix corridors. EDGE is also working with us on placemaking, green infrastructure, trail development and adaptive reuse of historic structures in the urban core.

To the South, in February 2016 we met with DePaul Properties who were interested in doing a housing project here in Rome. Very quickly we all became laser focused on the former Dewitt Clinton School property. The first hurdle was passed last September when DePaul was awarded a State grant to cover services they wished to provide at the proposed new facility, and then almost a year after we started our discussions their purchase offer was accepted on the former Dewitt Clinton School property culminating in yesterday's announcement that the former school site would finally be redeveloped. The \$18 million Dewitt Clinton Apartments will become reality serving as a catalyst to not only revitalize the neighborhood offering midmarket rate apartments, but also provides the impetus for us to continue our rehabilitation work on the waterfront. DePaul works closely with neighborhoods where their projects are located and last night DePaul representatives began briefing the neighborhood and gathering their input at the 2nd and 3rd ward neighborhood meeting held at the South Rome Senior Center.

Concurrently, the Administration and the Department of Community and Economic Development has been working with the Department of State since December 2015 even before officially taking office to

recapture the Harborway on the Erie grant that was awarded during the Brown Administration but allowed to expire during the subsequent administration. With DePaul as a development partner, we were able to convince the DOS to give us another opportunity to implement this grant along our waterfront. I am very proud to announce that DOS has reauthorized this grant to the City of Rome to be utilized for area wide connectivity and infrastructure improvements to support the DePaul project as well as other improvements taking place along the canal. The total award of this grant is \$780,000 and work will begin soon with planning, and engineering design.

With the assistance of Assemblyman Brindisi, we were also able to secure \$500,000 for further improvements to the Bellamy Harbor Park area. This funding will help us toward completion of the Navigation Center, building a walkway from the Navigation Center to the Terminal building underneath the Barge Canal bridge so visitors may walk safely from side to side. The Terminal building will also be outfitted with restrooms, thus providing restroom facilities on both sides of the canal park for visitor convenience. Grading work is also taking place along Harbor Way in hopes of developing a limited scope RFP close to the Mill Street streetscape.

The Department of Community & Economic Development was successful in applying for \$450,000 from NYS Environmental Facilities Corps Green Innovation Grant Program to support the waterfront park redevelopment efforts. This funding was secured last year to rehabilitate the underutilized parking area along Mill Street into an asset for the waterfront district. The project is currently underway and will be completed within the next few months. When completed, this project will offer accessible parking spaces and walkways to connect to Bellamy Harbor. The project will also feature green infrastructure such as tree plantings and storm water basins to collect and treat rainwater before running into the canal. This is a further progression of the City's efforts in cleaning and protecting its waterways and re-beautifying our city with urban forestry.

We are working diligently with other potential investment partners along the canal and may have some exciting announcements in the coming months concerning those negotiations.

The Downtown Rome BOA entered its Implementation Phase last year with the E. Dominick Street Streetscape project. The approximately \$1 Million investment presents a modern streetscape with bike lane markers, pedestrian walkway signals, plantings, sidewalks, general roadway surface rehabilitation and green infrastructure improvements.

An RFP is being sought to remediate and demolish the structures that once encompassed the former 1333 E. Dominick Street property which housed a former machinery company. This remediation work is part of a \$200,000 EPA grant initiative led by Barton & Loguidice Engineers. This rehabilitation project is another important step in improving one of our gateway entrances to the city, and hopefully may open another very unsightly area for future development.

The City has also made significant façade improvements in this area at Bucky & Georgette's and the new Copper City Brewery. Bids will be received soon for façade improvements to Donna's at the corner of 5th Street and E. Dominick Street.

Heading north we turn our attention to the Floyd Avenue/Park Drive development area. A contract has been awarded and demolition work will soon begin on the former Woodhaven housing complex. The significance of this area for our City's future development cannot be ignored. With MVCC becoming an

anchor on the Floyd Avenue entryway to the Griffiss Business and Technology Park, a new Stewart's will soon be constructed on a portion of the parcel formerly occupied by Building 240. The long awaited Route 825 reconstruction project is underway and will transform traffic movement through Griffiss Park. With the Woodhaven housing coming down, our opportunity to open a mixed use commercial/residential neighborhood within walking distance of Griffiss Park will be a central component to helping grow our residential tax base. CT Male, our redevelopment consultant, has been gathering information from public engagement meetings with residents and potential developers, and will be reporting back to the community on May 23 at a public engagement meeting to take place right here at MVCC from 5:00 to 7:00 PM with an eye toward presenting results so far and gathering more input on those results as a master plan is formulated for this important development corridor. The \$1.5 million investment made here by Empire State Development in demolition is only the beginning of a new chapter for future development opportunities.

Private sector investment is also taking place on Griffiss Park. AIS, founded and headquartered in Rome, is growing with an interior \$700,000 fitout of their building estimated to be completed in June. Having acquired 3 companies over the past 2 years, AIS is currently hiring in its Rome headquarters. Kris-Tech Wire put the finishing touches on their new manufacturing facility last fall, and immediately added a \$1.8 million addition to the new facility. Sovena USA has an employee recruitment day just finishing up as we speak at the Griffiss Institute. Premier Aviation has won contracts which will stabilize their presence at the airport for years to come and they are actively hiring qualified employees. Just today Ed Abounader of DFAS sent us a job posting for the hiring of 20 Accounting Technicians. Applicants can apply at USAJOBS.gov.

A few weeks ago, we received wonderful news that the Mohawk River Trail Phase 2 would be funded by a \$1.4 million dollar federal grant administered by New York State DOT. This will extend the trail system from the Chestnut Street area to Wright Settlement. Community outreach, planning, and Engineering design will dominate 2017 with a target date of trail construction in 2018.

We should all be proud of the level of economic development activity taking place throughout the City, public and private sector alike. There is a feeling of resurgency here in Rome as evidenced by the activity in our local real estate market. Real estate brokers and agents are reporting that real estate sales are on the rise and there is a renewed investment being made on the residential side of the ledger in Rome, which makes it all the more important that we carefully examine our housing offerings and continue to encourage developers to fill in the gaps with new, modern housing options like the Merrick Road Apartments and Foxwood Townhouses on Bielby Road. The City is doing its part to add to the residential reinvestment by returning over \$700,000 in real property sales/rehabilitation projects to the tax rolls in 2016, and we are off to a good start in 2017.

The Codes office in conjunction with Rome Main Streets Alliance won a \$150,000 LISC grant earlier this year to begin compiling information and locations of Zombie properties throughout our city. This effort is being funded through the Attorney General's office and will result in a database being developed to identify these property locations and their owners. It is our hope that as this database collection process evolves, the Attorney General will offer more guidance to us in combating this problem in our community. Our hope is when the data is compiled, the AG will stay engaged and help us to put pressure on these financial institutions to rehabilitate and move these properties back to local ownership.

All of this investment will eventually help the revenue side of our operating budget. Although I called for a Revenue/Housing Study Committee during last fall's budget presentation, there are two ongoing market studies which I believe we should pause and await for the final information to materialize through the Erie Blvd BOA, where we held a community engagement at the Capitol Theater earlier this year, and the work being done by our consultant CT Male in preparation for Woodhaven redevelopment. These market studies will ultimately provide us with invaluable information to work from as we move forward and should be available later this year.

As outlined in my 2017 budget message, the 2016 budget we inherited was a great challenge to have actual revenues meet expenses. I am happy to report through cost saving measures we took throughout 2016, we will end the year solidly in the black. We are now making personnel moves to right size some of our departments, such as engineering, which have grown too small to effectively handle the workload. With so many projects on the docket, we need more engineering help in the field to better manage and adequately oversee all different types of public works projects happening all over our city.

Early in 2016, I initiated a community stakeholder partnership meeting involving our School Superintendent, Peter Blake, Rome Memorial Hospital CEO David Lundquist, and MVCC Rome Campus Dean Franca Armstrong. With all of us just starting our terms of employment, we have found a new energy and new willingness to share ideas between our organizations with the goal of continuing to lay the foundation through education, healthcare, and local government to strategize ideas to showcase and strengthen our community's assets. In the near future we will announce a collaborative initiative with those ideas in mind.

Last year, the City along with our benefits provider Key Insurance and Benefits Service began exploring the options related to telemedicine. Many different plans were reviewed with all vendors not offering the same services, but based on my experience in a healthcare related business we ultimately decided to engage United Concierge Medicine due to the fact that their program treats a broader scope of care and has a larger impact. Introduced on January 1, 2017 our member utilization through May 4th shows a 21% utilization rate by our members and a projected yearly utilization at 62%. Our projected savings is approximately \$50,876 in just a little over four months with a total yearly projected savings of \$181,068.

We have been working diligently to address social service gaps which exist in our community and to reengage agencies in the County which specialize in social services back into our city. To that end, we held meetings early last year with Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency in hopes of getting a better handle on what services they were providing in Rome. With the passing of Msgr. Culkin, I saw an opportunity to possibly help Community Action establish a new shelter at the former St. Mary's Rectory. I contacted Father Hearn who did not hesitate when I asked him if he would be willing to speak to Amy Turner at Community Action, and thus the Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency almost a year later has opened a much needed shelter for Runaway and Homeless Youth in the former rectory. This is the first of its kind in our area and will service not only Rome, but Oneida County. We are proud that the City of Rome will participate with Community Action and St. Mary's/St. Peter's Church to offer these much needed services. Please welcome and thank Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency Executive Director, Amy Turner.

We next identified end of life care as being a significant healthcare service gap in our City. We met the middle of last year with Gina Ciaccia of Abraham House to explore the possibility of bringing a second Abraham House to Rome. Gina enthusiastically supported the idea of a second Abraham House and the

process began immediately to reach out to Rome Memorial Hospital who is fully on board, and then our community stakeholders to gauge interest in a project like this for Rome. I am very happy to announce today that, although the Rome Home no longer has the funding to remain an active adult home, the Board has graciously offered their facility to Abraham House for a community care facility which will service patients and families who do not have the resources at home for a loved one who is at the end of life, but will benefit by Abraham House Rome who will provide end of life care in a home environment for patients and families at the former Rome Home. Gina please stand and accept our welcome to the City of Rome!

The City is also working with the Community Schools Initiative. We are sorry to have Brandon LaRoy of our Community and Economic Development Department leave us, but excited to work with him as he leads this new venture, which the City looks forward to participating with. Rome is only 1 of 3 school districts in the United States to receive the American Federation of Teachers Innovation Fund of \$135,000 concentrating on project based learning centered on STEAM initiatives and involving community partners.

Additionally, the City is also interested in furthering our investments in the tourism industry. This important segment of our economy drives new visitors who will hopefully spend a night in our hotels, share a meal in our restaurants and frequent our tourist attractions. Fort Stanwix National Monument has set visitor attendance records each of the last two years, and this year hopes to reach an attendance high of 100,000. With Fort Stanwix serving as the anchor attraction, visitors are moving throughout Rome and Oneida County generating room tax and sales tax.

Growing tourism opportunities was on our minds early last year when the opportunity presented itself to purchase the Christmas light displays from the Resource Center for Independent Living. With Assemblyman Brindisi's help in purchasing the displays, the City in the coming years will position itself as a Christmas season destination for residents and visitors alike to enjoy our Christmas light displays. Each year we will add Christmas light display locations throughout the City. We hope to attract visitors to the city from Thanksgiving through New Year's for an added extra boost not only for our business community, but our City as well.

We are also directly involved in the 200th Anniversary Celebration of the Erie Canal this summer. In conjunction with the Honor America Days Committee and the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce, we were able to apply for and receive funding of \$28,500 in programming dollars to support a State celebration here in Rome to commemorate the first shovelful of dirt in Rome to begin construction of the Erie Canal, and another capital grant of \$97,000 to light the former General Cable water tower as a lasting symbol of the Bicentennial Anniversary. Mohawk Valley EDGE also played a significant role in helping us to research the tower lighting as well as writing the successful grant applications. We will all be working together, EDGE, Chamber and the City to ensure a great celebration on Saturday, July 22nd, at Bellamy Harbor Park. For this year only, this event will serve as the official opening event of Honor America Days.

The Rome Art and Community Center also plays an important role our City's tourism industry as well as adding to the cultural vitality of our City. We are continuing to maintain the property as evidenced by a rather extensive roof repair and insulation endeavor made possible through an insurance claim and CDBG historic preservation funding. Our Parks Department is now tasked with paying careful attention to the grounds landscaping and general overall appearance of this historic mansion. The Center hosts a very

successful Athletics children's camp in the summertime and hopes to expand its educational opportunities for children year round. Through Senator Griffo's efforts to secure a \$150,000 grant, we are working with the State to finalize a contract to study the electrical circuitry at the Art Center to better support events like Holiday House.

To support events at Franklyn's Field, like the weekly Farmer's Market, our Parks Department crew will erect a pavilion type structure to provide permanent protection from the sun and rain for entertainers at the park as well as supporting our summer lunch program. Our Parks and Recreation opportunities are second to none. Last year we made a concerted effort to add much more programming back to our parks during the summer recess and that really paid off. Participation was up in almost all our clinics and activities. This year will offer even more diversity in our program offerings with the additions of field hockey, Girl Talk, Kids Yoga, Rugby, Street Hockey and a Vitality Fitness Program targeting ages 4 thru 12. Through the generosity of Tri-Valley Beverage and the Davidson Auto Group we will once again offer a Monday night summer concert series on the green at City Hall beginning Monday, July 10 for 7 weeks. Parks and Recreation was able to reinstitute the Stan Evans and John DellaContrada basketball leagues, adult flag football, an adult 3 on 3 hockey tournament and has increased the use of Kennedy Arena in the non ice season. As a result of our neighborhood walk last year in Glendale Manor, we will add programming activities two mornings a week at Glenview Park to service children in Glendale Manor and nearby Valley View Manor.

Senator Griffo has also been an ardent supporter of our parks, and we are awaiting a final contract from the State to begin work at Gansevoort and Veterans Parks on N. James Street. These parks will receive \$25,000 each with our Community and Economic Development Department working with stakeholders on submitting renovation plans for each park with the State.

All of our municipally owned buildings and grounds are always of major concern, but none more so than City Hall due to leaking, overall deterioration of the curtain wall and walkway leading from the James Street garage and lack of repointing of brick on both sides of the building. We are working to finalize a plan to present to the Common Council to begin discussions of how best to address this facility long term and we will soon make announcements on funding to get this much needed repair work underway.

Just recently, the Codes Department secured a Clean Energy Community Grant for \$100,000, no taxpayer match required, which will allow us to purchase 3 electric vehicles to be utilized by our Codes and Assessor's offices, which will not only decrease the carbon emissions and help the environment but also will save our taxpayers the added expense of funding \$100,000 worth of new vehicles.

Many of the projects highlighted today included grant funding utilizing funds obtained from many different agencies supporting multiple city endeavors. Our Administration has taken a very aggressive approach in applying for and seeking out any and all grant funding opportunities, but none of this would be possible without the assistance of our NYS representatives, the support of many different New York State agencies, our working relationship with the Governor's local representatives, the Regional Economic Development Council, Mohawk Valley EDGE along with the support of our County Executive and the Board of Legislators, as well as our Common Councilors, and we will continue to maintain these relationships as future grant funding opportunities become available.

No community is successful without the public safety departments of Police and Fire, and Rome is no exception. We are blessed to have two outstanding departments who go above and beyond to make our

City one of the safest and most protected anywhere. It would take another hour to adequately describe the day to day operations of our public safety departments. However, I would like to hit the highlights. Our Police Department last year continued a major effort toward narcotics enforcement through the Special Investigations Unit. There were 169 investigations, 46 search warrants were executed, 48 people were arrested involved in the trafficking of narcotics which resulted in the seizing of numerous amounts of cocaine, crack cocaine, marijuana, heroin and a whole host of other drugs along with firearms and cash seizures in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Agency and over \$500,000 in property seizures. The message here is clear, while the City of Rome is open for business, it is closed for crime and we will continue to pursue any and all who seek to destroy our City through burglary, drug trafficking and overall unlawfulness. RPD has sent a clear message with almost 2500 arrests in 2016, up approximately 150 from the year before.

Our Fire Department was extremely busy in 2016 with almost a dozen structure fires in the 1st quarter of last year and calls for service increasing about 9%. Fire and Police are both involved in responding to opioids overdosing, and they collectively administered lifesaving Narcan 50 times last year. The Fire Department worked closely with the American Red Cross to help educate and identify those in need of home smoke detectors. They then personally installed smoke detectors in our resident's homes to help make our community a safer place to live. RFD is continuously involved in community education through our schools, for those living in high rise apartment complexes and our senior population to enhance fire safety. The Administration was able to work with the firefighter's union to implement a staffing change which will result in a significant savings to the City in the next several budgets, but allowed upward movement of staff through attrition of manpower (a record 10 promotions occurred) all with minimal effect on day to day operations. I commend the Firefighter's union for working with us to accomplish these goals.

Construction will begin soon on new Public Safety Communications Towers on S. Charles Street and at the Griffiss Park. Additionally, the County will provide new radio equipment to the police and fire departments, while also allowing us to move our public works communications equipment onto the S. Charles Street Tower for increased communications capabilities. We thank the County Executive and the Board of Legislators for their strong commitment to public safety not only in Rome, but the entire County.

Earlier this year, we added a position directed at increasing the City's communication with the Community and enhancing our overall marketing efforts. In just a few short months, we have introduced a monthly Newsletter, a Tuesday feature Development Did You Know? Which posts a fact or update on the many development projects happening throughout the City, a Weekend Events Flyer, increased our social media presence through Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, with Facebook showing a 33% increase in traffic in just two months including a weekly feature on Friday with a different resident answering the question, "Why I Love Rome". Coming soon will be a complete redesign of the City's website to make it more functional and user friendly.

This season's Walk with the Mayor will begin on Monday, June 5th, and continue on Mondays and Tuesdays throughout June, July and August. This program was very successful last summer connecting the Administration with residents, and as a result, the City in conjunction with a locally owned company Capraro Technologies will be introducing a Rome 311 system. Rome 311 will allow residents either via telephone or a phone app to report issues with public works such as potholes, brush removal, tree

problems, etc. This system has been very successful in Utica, and we look forward to implementing it in Rome in the next several weeks.

This is just a small snapshot of all that is happening in our great City. There is more that unites us than separates us, and on behalf of our Administration I thank you for the opportunity to lead this wonderful community. God Bless all of you and our beloved City of Rome.