

# Lawrence State of the City

Mayor Daniel Rivera

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Councilors elected officials and fellow Lawrencians. I hope to provide to you a state of the City address that is equal to my time in office, short but full of action. I come to you on my thirty second day as mayor. In this short time as Mayor my team and I have found some very important things to be true. As Mayor we have had an opportunity to do something good every day, we have found that Lawrence is a community that people in the Merrimack valley and across the commonwealth want to help and they want to see us succeed, and lastly in these short 32 days what I have found is that since the election in November the state of our City is Hopeful.

Hopeful that we have experience and wisdom on our city council, hopeful that we have a school committee that will work with the State to continue the progress seen in our schools. It is truly a hopeful time for our City.

I will say that hope alone cannot make our city better. We must use the hope for a better Lawrence to fuel the hard arduous work of making Lawrence better.

So as we look forward to the next year we have much to do to make Lawrence better. First we must make our city safer. We will add more police officers to our department and we will work to make it the most disciplined, effective crime fighting department in the state. We have already brought back compstat to make sure that we are policing smarter, but we also have responded quickly to spikes in crimes in ways that both protect the community and lets criminals know that lawlessness in Lawrence will not be tolerated. A big part of what we have to do this year to make our City safer is embark on an inclusive, thorough search committee that will help us hire both a Chief of Police and a Fire Chief.

In this coming year we will also work to reorganize key departments and work to make our government more efficient and responsive to our fellow residents' needs. To that end I will send down to you before the budget a proposal for the reorganization of our Community Development, Economic Development, Planning, and Inspectional Services department. This alignment of our development functions with the enforcement and planning functions of the Inspectional Services will make sure that we have the most effective effort to bring jobs and industry to the City.

We will continue to send to the City Council competent, dedicated, members of our community for consideration to our boards and commissions. We will also make sure we provide to them all the information and training they need to the best work possible.

As suggested by the fine work of our transition team we will begin the work to increase the profile and condition of our Library, and start the work of making it a center for arts and culture as well as education. All Cities of note have always had in its core a world class Library. We will make sure that Lawrence will be no different.

Lastly you can look forward to a budget to be submitted to you 2 weeks earlier than you are used to. As past chair of the Budget and finance committee I know the time and energy it takes to go through our City's budget and I want to make sure we can come away from the budget debate with a document that

you and the community has thoroughly reviewed. And as a preview of that budget I plan on sending it to you and not raising taxes to the levy. I believe that a community with one of the lowest per-capita incomes and has been taxed to the levy for the last 12 years deserves a break. Be clear that this will not be easy but we are committed to it.

So we begin the year full of hope, full of energy and with much work to do, but I believe in my heart that if we work together we will accomplish what we set our minds to. In my short time as Mayor I have represented our city in many venues, including this year's President's state of the Union address in Washington, thanks to Congresswomen Niki Tsongas, what struck me most about my visit to our nation's capital was that even in this polarized, gridlock atmosphere that has gripped our national politics, everyone that was in the capital that night was full of hope, hope and anticipation of the possibility for greatness, the possibility of bold action, of a challenge to make our nation better. We too have that hope, that possibility those challenges. And I look forward to greeting it all and accomplishing much with you.

Thank you