

# RENEW THE PROMISE

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On election night as I stood on the podium to declare victory, I was suddenly transported to my upstate New York childhood. For me, one of the best parts of growing up in Central New York was sledding down a steep hill after a fresh snowfall – the thrill of the ride that was also scary and tested your courage. On election night in November, I could feel the excitement of the ride to come, but I was filled with apprehension because I could see the ramps and bumpy terrain awaiting: unacceptable graduation rates; deterioration of our neighborhood fabric; senseless acts of violence; the decades-long flight of jobs and industry; and grave fiscal constraints with limited resources from the state and federal governments. Certainly no analogy can do justice to the gravity of the challenges ahead, but like childhood friends cheering me on down the hill, my friends and supporters that election night and throughout the year have helped give me the confidence to embrace these challenges that come with the new year as opportunities to renew the promise of Syracuse. And just like Syracusans throughout the decades, my administration has pushed off this week for a ride full of both obstacles and opportunities.

Clearly, the greatest opportunity we have is the Say Yes to Education Initiative. We must – and will – make the necessary decisions to maximize the benefits this program holds for our city's children, families, and, not unimportantly, economic development. The program is the flagship of what will be an innovative and holistic strategy for providing greater opportunities for our young people. Only a fully integrated approach that considers all points of contact between government services and our families and children will bring lasting change. Say Yes to Education and other creative programming properly coordinated with public services can help provide the brighter future that all of Syracuse's children deserve. As I said throughout the campaign, if we are to truly be leaders, then we will not squander the potential this program has for our entire community.

In times of challenge, we will rethink government's role, particularly with respect to economic development. I firmly believe government does not create jobs; the private sector does. My administration will (1) implement a regional strategy for economic development and (2) create an efficient environment for businesses to interact with the City. With existing economic generators, abundant natural resources, hard-working people, and affordable, readily available options for business start-ups, expansions, and relocations, Syracuse clearly has significant opportunities for economic growth. However, Syracuse is just one part of a region, albeit an important part. Economic trends impact our entire region and, accordingly, we must capitalize on those trends as a region, not as bifurcated groups. Working across the region with all stakeholders, we will develop and implement a cogent regional economic development strategy. At the same time, we will target areas of our City that are most in need of reinvestment and promote

and incent growth in the areas that make sense for us a region, such as the medical and green technology sectors. Contemporaneously, my administration will streamline the bureaucratic approval process and maximize the public benefit that comes from the use of public dollars. One of the largest complaints I heard during the campaign was that it is tough to do business with the city and that time is money for businesspeople. It is time to move our city government into a new era of economic development principles and practices that will lead to new growth and private sector opportunity.

The new police and fire chiefs have also been tasked with changing traditional approaches to their professional roles. With an emphasis on community policing, we must foster stronger relationships between our police force, our neighborhoods, our schools, and grassroots community members. Building more trust and effective communication between these groups and individuals will create an interwoven network of interested citizens that will generate more positive change than any one group can. Additionally, while providing world-class fire and emergency medical services has been a Syracuse hallmark for decades – and will continue to be – we think these services can be shared with others in our community to create a more efficient provision of public safety. Accordingly, we will work with others in our community to explore these opportunities.

Indeed, as I look down this hill, just as I did as a child so many times, I see a thrilling ride alongside the potential pitfalls. I see a Syracuse that provides opportunity for all our diverse communities – young and old, rich and poor, people of all races, ethnicities, abilities, and nationalities – who work hard and dream to achieve a better life for themselves and their families. A city where hard-working men and women can find the jobs that will provide them with pride and dignity. A city where all our people can find well-paying jobs that will put food on the table, heat their homes and pay for their family's healthcare. A city that grows small businesses, fosters the creation of green jobs, encourages entrepreneurship, and develops economic opportunities that will create local wealth, advance our region as a cradle for sustainable industries, and provide a lasting public benefit.

I see a Syracuse where our children are not afraid to walk to our schools and play in our neighborhoods. A city where parents believe their children step outside their doors and not into the strife and peril of gangs and drugs, but into a city where any dream can be realized. A city with the schools and educational support systems that make individual success a true possibility for all our children. Importantly, in order to accomplish all of this, I see a Syracuse that recognizes its true potential and isn't afraid to take new and innovative approaches to reach that potential.

After all, Syracuse was born into prosperity and preeminence through a spirit of resolve, innovation and self-determination – and through this spirit it will be renewed. I am looking forward to the next four years and hope you will join me for what promises to be a thrilling ride.