

Mr. President, Madam Clerk, honorable members of the City Council, Dr. Dakin, members of the School Committee, Mr. Speaker, Senator Petruccelli, Representative Vincent, District Attorney Dan Conley, Sheriff Tomkins, to all department heads, and last, but certainly not least, citizens of Revere; Good evening and thank you for attending and or watching tonight's annual State of the City Address.

In 2014 we were tested as a city, but despite the obstacles and challenges put before us, I never once doubted our resolve. Time and again our community came together with a positive vision for the future for all our neighborhoods. Because of all of YOU, I am more confident than ever, that Revere can accomplish anything.

In 2014 we continued to focus on our core tenets; to provide our children a **first class, 21st century education**; continuing to shine a light on our community in an effort to attract new investment and meaningful economic development projects; in maintaining a vigilance and commitment to keep our neighborhoods safe; and continuing the transformation of **city services** through innovation and transparency. We have made progress in each of these areas, but we believe there is still much to be done.

I have to thank the many dedicated public servants working for and on behalf of the city, along with members of both the School Committee and City Council who sit with me at the table to look for ways to improve our neighborhoods and keep our city moving forward. Yes, we have much to be thankful for, and much to look forward to in 2015.

Our public school system continues to make us proud and is one of the key factors behind the strength and resiliency of our city.

Dr. Dakin, the School Committee, our administrators, and teachers, are amongst the best in the state, if not the entire country.

In 2014, The **National Center for Urban School Transformation** named Revere High School the Best Urban School in America. As you can imagine, the competition was fierce with over 10,000 schools from across the country applying. This award is exciting for our entire school district.

Revere Public Schools are constantly adapting and changing in order to meet the ever-growing needs of our students. It is great to see their hard work rewarded.

Revere Public Schools was also named a model innovation city by **Footsteps2Brilliance**. Dr. Dakin oversees a school district where funding and space limitations allow only 40% of the district's preschool age children to participate in Pre-K.

Realizing these limitations, Dr. Dakin leveraged the power of **the Footsteps2Brilliance** Mobile Platform to reach the parents of children not enrolled in pre-K programs.

Without expending tax dollars to build additional classrooms, we were able to quickly expand our pre-K capacity and change the literacy environment so that all children can now enter kindergarten with the pre-requisite skills needed for academic success.

In being named a model innovation city, we are able to provide the Footsteps2Brilliance award-winning literacy app to every Revere family that has a pre-K through 3rd grade child without any cost to them.

We are very excited to see the new **Staff Sgt. James J. Hill School, along with the newly reconstructed Harry Della Russo Stadium**, both nearing completion. The stadium will be completed and open to the public by June 1st, and the new Hill School is planned to open in September of 2015. These are critical investments that will ensure that our children, and community, have state of the art space to grow and learn.

I want to take a moment to highlight a program that brought together our schools, our business community, and city government. Back in June of 2013, the US Conference of Mayor's announced a national contest that was put together in conjunction with tech giant Google, in an effort to get businesses across America online. The program was aptly called "Get Your Business Online GYBO).

Cities competed by using creative techniques and outreach in helping get local businesses online through this program that provided a free website and 1 year free hosting. Our High School Interact Club along with Youth in Action worked hand in hand with our local Chamber of Commerce, and members of the administration to put together a plan- the results were amazing. Dozens of small businesses participated, and many realized immediate growth and profitability.

I am so proud of the efforts put into this competition and so happy that we were rewarded last June at the US Conference of Mayor's convention in Dallas, TX where Revere was named the 1st Place winner.

Along with this national recognition, Revere received a \$50,000 dollar technology grant that is being used to sustain this initiative going forward as one of just three cities nationwide that are participating in a pilot program with Google.

I look forward to finding other ways to work with our talented young people on projects that help strengthen our community. We are blessed to have such strong, positive, and wonderful children in our school system.

They make Revere a better place and will continue to make us proud for generations to come.

As our local economy continues to grow and flourish, I will continue, as I have in the past, to prioritize **neighborhood safety**.

Our Police, Fire, Inspectional Service, and Public Works departments continue to be on the front lines everyday working to make Revere a safer, healthier, stronger community.

Last year, we saw a significant **decrease in crime in virtually every category**. **Overall, crime** decreased a total of 23.9% with a 13.5% decrease in what is categorized as serious crimes. We saw similar reductions last year where overall crime went down 14.6% with serious crimes down 13.2%.

Now we recognize that most residents aren't necessarily overly concerned, or even care about statistics- particularly if you are the victim of a crime.

We will continue to focus on not just reducing crime, but ensuring that our residents feel safe in their homes and in their neighborhoods.

Our Police Department is now utilizing "data driven" policing practices that focus on several factors; the analysis of crimes being committed; background searches of suspected and convicted felons; and intelligence gathering from members of the public. With this information in hand, we can better prepare our patrolmen, detectives, and specialized units on a daily basis.

Our thanks go out to Chief Joe Cafarelli and his dedicated team of law enforcement professionals for your work on behalf of all Revere residents. I cannot express what it means to have you at the helm of our police force.

Our **Fire Department**, led by Chief Gene Doherty, continues to provide our community with the highest levels of service with regards to medical aid, fire safety and prevention, and emergency management.

Chief Doherty is a vital spoke in the wheel for virtually all emergency situations we may be called upon to handle. He and his department continues to see reduced response times in relation to fires and medical emergencies. A real special “thank you” to Chief Doherty for his extraordinary work in the wake of the tornado. You have been a rock for this city and I am thankful to have you by my side.

Public Works and Inspectional Services continue to do all they can to ensure our neighborhoods are clean and healthy. Public works is continuing to utilize our newly developed Work Order Management System, and Mobile Application, along with social media, in order to respond to city requests more efficiently.

Inspectional Services, through our Safe Housing Task Force, is making great strides in holding absentee landlords accountable for overcrowding, unsanitary, and unsafe conditions. These are real issues that impact entire neighbourhoods and I am pleased with their progress, perseverance, and determination.

I want to remind all residents about our See, Click, Fix mobile application. If you see something that needs any city department’s attention, please go to see, click, fix or visit revere.org to send us your request. One of the primary ways to improve our neighborhoods is to hear directly from you. I encourage residents to voice their concerns and to let us know when assistance is needed. Programs like this, through innovation and new technologies, will reform the delivery of **city services, and remain** a top priority for my administration. Mayor Kevin Johnson of Sacramento, the President of United States Conference of Mayor’s believes we are entering a new era for cities --- one he calls, “Cities 3.0.” He stated: “today, our cities need to be a hub for innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology. One that is paperless, wireless, and cashless.”

In 2015, the city of Revere will be reviewing and beginning the process of implementing an online bill payment system for all city services. A paperless and wireless Revere is on its way and we can achieve this because of the work we have already done. We will create a virtual city hall for all residents, accessible 24 hrs a day/7 days a week. I am proud of the

changes we are making and in promoting an unparalleled commitment to transparency and efficiency across all departments of city government.

Like Mayor Johnson, I believe in this new direction we have charted for our community. Government is constantly being forced to do more with less. In order to meet the needs of our residents, we must adapt, change, and streamline services.

Our **budget process** has been an area of great reform and transformation since 2012. Our Budget Committee, in collaboration with the Collins Center at the University of Massachusetts, has sought to make the process more understandable and open to the public.

This may also be a good time to mention that our city received another bond upgrade and validates our abilities to handle the city's finances. This upgrade means better rates for capital projects and lower costs to the taxpayers. The market has confidence in Revere and so do I. Thank you to our Director of Finance, George Anzuoni and our entire finance team; you are making a real positive difference.

Prior to assuming office back in January of 2012, I led a group of sixty policy experts, community stakeholders, and city leaders in creating a path forward for our City. They created a report that has been a valuable road map and resource for me over the past three years. In anticipation and preparation for the future, we have reassembled a new team consisting of many former members of that committee, along with several new ones.

They have been working diligently in creating a new and updated document titled “**Moving Revere Forward: A Progress Report.**”

The committee is looking to the future- and plotting a course, which leads to growth, prosperity, and even further transparency. This report will be a new and updated road map for city government to follow now, and for years to come. I look forward to working with all members of the various subcommittees who our helping to shape our shared vision for Revere.

And while I value everyone's participation in this process, I'd like to acknowledge one individual that I now have the tremendous opportunity to work with on a daily basis. That is our newly elected **State Representative RoseLee Vincent**. For years RoseLee was an advocate for the citizens of our community as Chief of Staff to former State Representative, Kathi Ann Reinstein. When Roselee decided to run for representative, I immediately felt that she would be perfect for the job.

I knew RoseLee would be able to hit the ground running and advocate for the issues most important to our city. Many of these issues involve Revere Beach, Housing, Transportation, and Senior services. I look forward to working with RoseLee for many years, and am thankful to her and her predecessor, former state representative Kathi Reinstein for their commitment to our residents and our neighborhoods.

For some time now, we've talked about Revere being a City on the rise. If you look out across the city today, you will see that Revere is literally a City on the rise, both in steel and concrete.

Vanguard at Waterfront Square, Market Basket, Harley Davidson, Harry Della Russo Stadium, 565 Beach St., TA Associates, For Kids Only, 39 units of senior housing at the former site of Reardon's Restaurant, and the new Sgt. James J. Hill School represent over \$150 million in public and private investment across our community.

These developments will change the face of Revere for decades to come. To this point, our development strategy has been to offer tax incentives, expedite the permitting process, and seek to create specialized zoning districts that will foster desired uses. We know this is real progress, however, we continue to challenge ourselves daily- we know there is much more to be done.

When I took office, you may recall that I elevated the Economic Development function to a cabinet position.

I named John Festa, our new Director of Economic Development, and empowered him to head all of Revere's development efforts. John and I work hand in hand, each and every day.

He has been a tireless advocate in planning and promoting all of the projects and initiatives I mentioned earlier. I want to thank John and our entire Planning Department led by Frank Stringi for the work you have done and continue to do.

Ben Franklin once said "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

That is why, today, I am announcing a new initiative: **Plan Revere**. **Plan Revere** will take a comprehensive view of all development in Revere.

I am calling on John to spearhead this plan to develop and redevelop our great oceanfront community. “**Plan Revere**” will conduct an analysis of the City’s needs and discuss the potential for a full-fledged planning and development process.

“Plan Revere” will commission a planning process for the entire City of Revere that focuses on our strongest assets, our proximity to Boston, our waterfront, and our access to public transportation.

Comprehensive planning helps communities shape their destinies. Around the world, businesses, nonprofit organizations and institutions plan to assure that they can meet today’s challenges without sacrificing tomorrow’s opportunities. When cities and towns do the same thing, the result is successful growth and sustainability.

Recognizing that Governments generally work in the present, responding to existing demands and crisis, comprehensive planning is all about balance. It gives residents and public officials a chance to really think about transportation, housing, public services, open space, and economic development, while ensuring that decisions are made with sensitivity towards the needs and opportunities, for both today and tomorrow.

This is why a collaborative process is so essential. It is imperative that we receive input from residents, business owners, and other stakeholders. They walk Revere’s streets every day; they work and shop in our many commercial districts; they play in our parks, and volunteer in our community. They worry about their children’s ability to get into college, to find a job, or to buy a home.

My plan is to include all members of the City Council, and appoint a 50 member Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee that will be charged with crafting new zoning and policy recommendations, as well as offering input for new and emerging district designations. If you or someone you know is interested in joining such a committee, I encourage you contact my office, or John Festa, and forward your resume and credentials. We need your help.

Some of the areas and issues we will be looking at will include Suffolk Downs and Wonderland Dog Track. While we weren’t awarded a casino license, we were handed an opportunity to craft our own vision for what’s best for Revere at these locations.

Tonight, I am calling upon our friends at Suffolk Downs and Wonderland, as well as Boston Mayor Marty Walsh to work with me in entering conversations regarding the future and development of both of these locations.

Suffolk Downs represents the largest tract of undeveloped land in Metropolitan Boston. It sits less than 2 miles from downtown Boston, has two rapid transit stops, and straddles Rte 1A. Our Future is bright if we plan for it and we are starting that process right now.

I want to close tonight by spending some time thanking some of the people that make Revere great.

I want to thank and congratulate Revere **Resident Judge Roberto Ronquillo** who back in January of 2014 was named Chief Justice of the Boston Municipal Court (BMC).

Congratulations Judge.

I want to also take a moment to thank the many heroes that are always there when Revere calls. First responders, our Public Works Department, private businesses, and the members of our community; all friends and neighbors, who truly came together in the wake of the Tornado last July.

And as we continue to rebuild our neighborhoods, we are more determined than ever to finish our revitalization efforts along Broadway- the area hardest hit by the storm.

I would like to publicly thank former Middlesex County District Attorney and current partner at Nixon Peabody, Gerry Leone for taking on the role of administrator for our Tornado Relief Fund.

He, along with his colleague Eric Walz, David Surface, CEO of St Jean's Credit Union, Frank Perullo of Sage Systems, former Commissioner of the Massachusetts Probation Department Ron Corbett, local resident and business owner Michael Falzone, our Building Inspector Bennie DeChristoforo, and several others donated countless hours to this effort. Because of their hard work, close to 150 families received some form of assistance to help deal with the financial losses they sustained, and helped them to start getting their lives back on track.

I thank them -and our city thanks them. While everyone that contributed deserves to be recognized, I must acknowledge our friends at Suffolk Downs, People's United Bank, St. Jean's Credit Union, MassPort, Comcast, Cataldo Ambulance, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and

the Neighborhood Developers. They, along with over 800 individuals and businesses donated over \$250K.

Revere showed what we are made of and we put it all on display for the world to see. Thanks to all of you that have done so much for our city.

We came together as a community through the clean-up effort and then, to support our neighbors so they did not have to go it alone. As Mayor, it was certainly one of my proudest moments.

In closing, 2014 was indeed a very busy year here in Revere. We continue to grow and evolve.

You've heard me talk a lot about our proximity to Boston, our beautiful oceanfront, access to public transportation, and vibrant local economy- Of course, these are tremendous attributes that we should all be proud of. But I believe what really makes Revere the special place it is, starts with our residents, and the many groups and organizations who so quietly and effectively volunteer in ways that make our city just that much better.

Groups such as the Revere Beach Partnership, the Beautification Committee, our Historical Society, Office of New Revere Residents, Neighborhood Advisory Committee, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary & Kiwanis Clubs, Veteran's and Civic Clubs, coaches, managers, and senior citizen mentors provide services that government never could. My thanks go out to all of you for your hard work and shared commitment to making Revere the best we can be. As I have said since first taking public office almost 15 years ago- Revere is a very special place.

I thank all of you for placing your confidence in me and for giving me this great opportunity to serve as your Mayor. I look forward to continuing to earn your trust in leading us into the best days this city has ever seen. Thank you for joining us here this evening. May God bless you, your families, and the great city of Revere.