

Aspirations.

I have them, and I was elected with enough of a margin that I believe most of you share them.

Oneonta's best days are before us - of that I am certain. As Mayor, I intend to lead us into that brighter future.

This is the moment, working as a team, that we will alter the course of the City, for our benefit and that of generations that follow.

Our government's direction will change noticeably on February 1st, when I will present the Common Council with a new initiative that will empower the community – YOU – with the charge of enhancing the quality of life in YOUR own neighborhoods.

You will be the change. And the City will be your support system.

Together, we will create a better place to live, to work and to play. And with that sweet taste of civic engagement, I will be asking more.

I will be soliciting the opinions and the strategies, the hopes, and dreams of those who've not previously been heard. Our table is large, and it will be accommodating of everyone who has a positive attitude and a willingness to be part of the solution.

My goal – my aspiration – is to increase Oneonta's population with gainfully employed young people and their families. My plan is to attract new and nimble businesses.

While it is true that the number I've offered is sometimes laughed at, I hold firm in my conviction that we can attract one-thousand new, employed residents to Oneonta. In so doing, we will increase our wealth, our consumer foot traffic, and the vibrancy and vitality of our downtown. We will increase our tax base, while lowering individual taxes.

Our strategy for recruitment success is to improve the quality of life for everyone in Oneonta. By most accounts this is our most marketable asset, and in our effort to distance ourselves from our competitors, we will expand that advantage.

Together, we will make continuing improvements to our neighborhoods – some big, many small – and in so doing we will engage the community and usher in a new era of civic-mindedness.

Our initial marketing strategy will target alumni, as well as past and current visitors to the area. The downstate workforce who, because of the pandemic, self-identified as no longer office-bound will be solicited as well.

I am convinced that if we can entice a visit to Oneonta, its many charms, unparalleled by other upstate cities of its size, will make a convincing argument for relocation.

And again... that is where YOU come in.

We have problems in need of solution, and your ideas, opinions, and collaboration are our best path to solutions.

Our priority will be solving our housing issues so that we have affordable homes and apartments for those living here now, as well as those we hope to attract. This has been a vexing problem for some time, and we must solve it.

To do so, we will engage new voices with new ideas and strategies that can inform the work of the City's Housing Commission. This is how we break the cycle of frustration and finally address the concerns that have stymied previous administrations.

Whether it's support of local business, identification of new revenue streams and the lowering of taxes, creation of an entertainment district, the reimagining of the Oneonta Theater, the embrace of our colleges into the fabric of our community, the creation of miles of new trails and a bike and pedestrian friendly city, or a myriad of other big and important goals, we will achieve our success TOGETHER.

That's my aspiration and my promise.