

Cheer Leading

I'm an unabashed cheerleader for the City of Oneonta.

Although I'm sometimes accused of painting too rosy a picture of where we are and where we're going, I believe that when you're talking about this city, in this moment, cheerleading is not only appropriate, but necessary.

Promoting, maintaining, and expanding common ground and bringing focus to our common cause, in which all can participate in the enhancement of our community, is my ideal of leadership.

We have our issues to deal with, (and we are.) But while we invest ourselves in their solution, we should regularly review and appreciate all that is going as hoped and planned.

And that's quite a bit.

A recent column in this paper by Alexander Thomas, Executive Director of the PLACES Institute, referenced my campaign promise to bring 1,000 new residents into Oneonta, and the dire need to do so.

"So how are we doing with that?", you might ask.

I'm pleased to report, very well.

We've subscribed to a database that provides verifiable information – name, address, etc. – for every new neighbor that's joined us. Since the earliest available reporting date (April '23), more than 300 people have moved into the city.

While that's not a "net" number and doesn't account for departures in the same timeframe, it's unquestionably very good news.

We'll be adding to that this month when the Dietz Street Lofts opens with over 60 apartments – home to singles, couples, and families. Happily, just a few months later, 2-dozen more apartments will become available in the Ford on Main.

Yes, we'll be monitoring parking availability.

Please note: I am STILL seeking help from anyone who can assist in counting empty spaces at 9am, 1pm, and 5pm. (Contact me.) We'll post that info to the web, where it will be extremely useful for assessing trends and strategizing parking priorities.

As the "lofts" fill up, there will be a further uptick in foot traffic on Main Street, and that projection has not gone unnoticed by entrepreneurs.

In just weeks, Downtown will have a new grocery and convenience store. I met the owners the other day, and they're a very nice family who will be joining us as new neighbors in the city. They'll be offering fresh fruits and vegetables, canned and packaged goods, a full deli counter, and hot meals prepared daily. Judging by the reactions on social media, this should be quite a boost for downtown!

It's already been a busier summer than usual as we benefit from a new, better relationship with the Cooperstown All Star Village, the unprecedented advocacy of Destination Marketing (County Tourism), and the promotional efforts of DO and the city's Engagement Marketing Taskforce.

When folks come downtown, they are finding a safer environment, as our Oneonta Police Department has begun regular foot (and bicycle) patrols of Main Street and the area. I cannot begin to convey the depth of my appreciation for their time and effort. It's making a big difference.

Oneonta is grappling with the same issues as are other municipalities, but there is more - much more, that we will be doing.

One element of that effort is being seen in Muller Plaza, where there's been an organic growth of entertainments and activities offered. We've had line dancing, a chess tournament, musicians, kids' games, and activities, and on our hottest days, an impromptu water feature (garden hose variety).

Look forward to seeing a dance class, photo sessions, a drumming circle, an embroidery class, and a paper kite-making workshop, and more.

There's reason to cheer, and opportunity to help.

As always, I invite you to visit All4Oneonta.com.