

**GOOD EVENING:**

**REVEREND CLERGY, DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE, PUBLIC OFFICIALS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF PEABODY WELCOME.**

**IT IS TRULY A PRIVILEGE TO BE SERVING AS YOUR MAYOR. IT IS BOTH EXCITING AND HUMBLING TO AGAIN RECEIVE THE TRUST OF THE VOTERS OF PEABODY. I WILL MAKE ONE PROMISE, AND THAT IS TO DO MY ABSOLUTE BEST TO UPHOLD THAT TRUST.**

**I WOULD FIRST LIKE TO THANK THE MANY VOLUNTEERS WHO HELPED ME DURING EACH OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS FOR MAYOR. I TRULY WOULD NOT BE HERE TONIGHT IF IT WERE NOT FOR YOUR HARD WORK, DEDICATION AND ASSISTANCE. THE JOB OF MAYOR IS NOT AN EASY JOB AND THE RIGORS OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND PUBLIC LIFE ARE INCREASINGLY DEMANDING AND CHALLENGING, AND I WANT YOU ALL TO KNOW HOW MUCH YOUR SUPPORT HAS MEANT AND CONTINUES TO MEAN TO ME OVER THESE YEARS.**

**I'D ESPECIALLY LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE MEMBERS OF MY IMMEDIATE FAMILY. ALL OF YOU HAVE HELPED TO KEEP ME GROUNDED AND GIVE ME PERSPECTIVE. TO DOTTIE, IN PARTICULAR, YOU HAVE NOT ONLY BEEN SO UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEMANDS OF THIS POSITION, BUT HAVE ALSO BEEN MY MOST VALUED CONFIDANT, ADVISOR AND, DARE I SAY, MY BETTER HALF. THANK YOU FOR ALWAYS BEING AT MY SIDE.**

**A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW COUNCILORS: ANNE MANNING, BARRY SINEWITZ AND DAVID GRAVEL. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE THREE OF YOU.**

**CONGRATULATIONS ALSO TO THE RETURNING MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL. TOGETHER, WE HAVE ACHIEVED A GREAT DEAL, AND I KNOW WE ALL RECOGNIZE THERE IS MUCH MORE TO BE DONE. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING TOGETHER TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF OUR COMMUNITY.**

**I ALSO WANT TO WELCOME AND THANK THE VARIOUS CITY DEPARTMENT HEADS, CITY HALL STAFF AND CITY EMPLOYEES FOR THE GREAT JOB THAT YOU DO EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR FOR ME AND FOR THE CITIZENS OF PEABODY. THE NUMEROUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SUCCESSES WE ENJOYED THE PAST TWO YEARS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE HELP, SUPPORT AND COOPERATION OF OTHERS. WITH THIS IN MIND, I WANT TO THANK MY FELLOW ELECTED OFFICIALS, VOLUNTEER BOARD AND COMMISSION MEMBERS AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVANTS WHO WORKED HARD, MADE TOUGH DECISIONS AND MADE SACRIFICES TO SUSTAIN AND MANAGE OUR COMMUNITY OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS.**

**AS A MAYOR, YOU ARE ONLY AS GOOD AS THE PEOPLE YOU HAVE AROUND YOU AND I AM FORTUNATE TO BE SUPPORTED BY A CADRE OF COMPETENT, DEDICATED PROFESSIONALS.**

**BECAUSE OF TIME LIMITATIONS I WILL ONLY HIGHLIGHT A FEW OF OUR MANY SUCCESSES. A DETAILED LIST OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS CAN BE FOUND IN THE APPENDIX TO THIS SPEECH.**

**MUNICIPAL COOPERATION**

PEABODY'S 16.9 SQUARE MILES HAVE ATTRACTED MEN AND WOMEN FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE PLANET - AND THROUGH THE GENERATIONS THEY BUILT, AND REBUILT, A CITY THAT IS STILL A BEACON OF HOPE TO THE WORLD—STILL ATTRACTING FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS SEEKING TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL. MANY CAME HERE TO WORK IN OUR HISTORIC LEATHER INDUSTRY AND TO FIND THEIR FORTUNES. BUT THEY FOUND - AND THROUGH THE DECADES FORGED - SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT. THEY CREATED A CITY THAT VALUES DIVERSITY, TOLERANCE, CREATIVITY, AND OPPORTUNITY. THEY MADE A CITY WHERE DREAMS COULD COME TRUE - REGARDLESS OF RACE, GENDER, AGE OR WHO YOU LOVE. THROUGH THE GENERATIONS, THOSE THAT HAVE COME BEFORE US HAVE BUILT A BETTER COMMUNITY THAN THE ONE THEY LEFT BEHIND. AND NOW - IT'S OUR TURN. OUR TURN TO RENEW THE PROMISE OF THIS GREAT CITY--AND TO LEAVE IT BETTER THAN WE FOUND IT.

ALTHOUGH WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MUCH OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS WE STILL HAVE MUCH TO DO. I WAS PLEASED AT HOW QUICKLY THE COUNCIL ACTED IN APPROVING THE RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECTS AT THE NORTH SHORE MALL. THIS QUICK AND DECISIVE ACTION HELPED OUR LARGEST TAX PAYER REDUCE IT'S COST, THUS ENABLING IT TO REBUILD AND RENOVATE SOONER AND MORE EFFICIENTLY. AS A RESULT, THEIR BOTTOM LINE WILL BE ENHANCED AND OUR ECONOMIC BASE STABILIZED.

I AM NOT SO PLEASED AT THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN TACKLING THE DIFFICULT ISSUES OF REZONING AND RESTRUCTURING THE MAIN STREET CORRIDOR. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAREFUL DELIBERATION AND DELIBERATELY PROCRASTINATING ON AN ISSUE. DURING THE RECENT ELECTION, I WALKED THE STREETS AND TALKED TO HUNDREDS OF PEABODY RESIDENTS, THEY WANT THEIR ELECTED OFFICIALS TO WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS. THEY WANT POSITIVE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS - NOT OBSTRUCTIONISM AND DELAY. SAYING "NO" TO EVERY PROPOSAL IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH. IF YOU SAY NO, PROPOSE A SOLUTION. IF WE ARE GOING TO SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESS THE MAJOR ISSUES WE FACE, WE NEED TO COME TOGETHER, FIND COMMON GROUND AND QUICKLY FIX THOSE AREAS WHERE THERE IS CONSENSUS.

WHY MUST WE DO THIS? PICK UP THE PAPERS AND READ THE ECONOMIC FORECASTS - MANY OF PEABODY'S CITIZENS ARE OUT OF WORK, MANY PEABODY FAMILIES HAVE LOST THEIR HOMES IN THE SUB-PRIME LENDING SCANDAL, AND MANY PEABODY FAMILIES ARE ONE PAY CHECK AWAY FROM FINANCIAL RUIN--AND FAR TOO MANY OF THEM ARE RUNNING OUT OF HOPE. MEANWHILE, WE HAVE FACTIONS IN PEABODY WHO CONSISTENTLY BLAME OUR CITY GOVERNMENT, AND FACTIONS WHO CONSISTENTLY BLAME THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY. FRANKLY, FINDING SOMEONE TO BLAME HAS NEVER BEEN A PROBLEM IN PEABODY, FINDING SOLUTIONS AND THE WILL TO DO MORE THAN JUST SUSTAIN THE STATUS QUO—THAT IS OUR TRUE TEST. I SAY IT'S TIME TO START WORKING TOGETHER.... TO FIND COMMON PURPOSE AND COMMON GROUND AND TO LEAD OUR WAY TO PROSPERITY.

THE CLEAR CHALLENGE OF LEADERSHIP IS TO FOCUS ON OUR ABILITY TO UNITE AROUND COMMON GROUND AND START TO TAKE ACTION ON CREATING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR OUR COMMUNITY. THIS WILL BE MUCH HARDER ON ALL ELECTED OFFICIALS THAN JUST SUSTAINING THE STATUS QUO—THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S EASY TO BE AGAINST SOMETHING, IT'S EASY TO BLAME, IT'S EASY TO "TABLE." WHAT'S HARD TO DO IS TO OPENLY, HONESTLY, LISTEN TO ALL SIDES, AND TO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE WE SERVE. WE NEED TO LEAVE BEHIND OLD

**GRUDGES AND LONG-HELD, *SELF-INTERESTED* POLITICAL AGENDAS IF WE ARE TO BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR THE CITIZENS OF PEABODY WE ARE ELECTED TO REPRESENT.**

**DESPITE THE DIFFERENCES IN THE VISIONS FOR OUR COMMUNITY, I DO BELIEVE THAT OVERALL PEABODY'S ELECTED OFFICIALS HAVE WORKED HARD AND WELL TOGETHER TO KEEP PEOPLE SAFE, TO IMPROVE OUR SCHOOL SYSTEMS, TO IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND CITY BUILDINGS, TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN OUR COMMUNITY AND TO KEEP PEABODY AFFORDABLE FOR WORKING FAMILIES. I AM PROUD OF THE WORK WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH BY WORKING TOGETHER.**

### **FISCAL OVERVIEW**

**I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT NOT ONLY WAS 2007 A VERY PRODUCTIVE YEAR BUT THAT PEABODY ENDED IT STANDING FISCALLY STRONG, ESPECIALLY WHEN COMPARED TO MANY OTHER AREA COMMUNITIES. TO REMAIN FISCALLY STRONG, PEABODY, LIKE OTHER MUNICIPALITIES IN MASSACHUSETTS, NEEDS ADDITIONAL REVENUE SOURCES AND BROADER STATE LEGISLATIVE HELP SO WE CAN BETTER CONTROL EXPENSES, SUCH AS ESCALATING HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS, AND OTHER EVER INCREASING UNFUNDED OR UNDER-FUNDED STATUTORILY MANDATED EXPENDITURES.**

**IF WE ARE TO STAY STRONG, OUR STATE GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO SPEND LESS TIME ON DIVISIVE SOCIAL ISSUES, AND MORE TIME ON SOLVING ESSENTIAL ECONOMIC CONCERNS SUCH AS JOB CREATION, PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND IN PROVIDING ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL AID TO MUNICIPALITIES - SUCH AS THE 40-10 REVENUE SHARING PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL MADE BY THE MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION (MMA). SIMPLY STATED THIS PROPOSAL ALLOCATES A FIXED PERCENTAGE OF STATE REVENUE TO MUNICIPALITIES. IT IS TIME THAT STATE GOVERNMENT EITHER GIVES US THE TOOLS OR SHOWS US THE MONEY, THE MONEY WE NEED TO FIX OUR FLOODING PROBLEM, FIX THE HIGGINS AND CENTER SCHOOLS, FIX OUR STREETS AND IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY. IT IS TIME FOR THE LEGISLATURE TO TALK LESS AND DELIVER MORE.**

**THIS YEAR WE WERE FORTUNATE THAT THE AVERAGE TAX INCREASE ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY WILL BE UNDER \$45 (80% OF SINGLE FAMILY HOMES IN PEABODY). ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS FOR THIS MINIMAL INCREASE WAS A BETTER THAN EXPECTED INCREASE IN NEW CONSTRUCTION GROWTH, PRIMARILY FROM FAIRFIELD APARTMENTS, BROOKSBY VILLAGE AND AVALON – CRANEBROOK. GIVEN THE LACK OF NEW REVENUE SOURCES FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND THE CONTINUING TREND OF INSUFFICIENT STATE AID, PEABODY MUST PROMOTE REASONABLE GROWTH TO ALLOW US TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT LEVEL OF CITY SERVICES AND AVOID FUTURE TAX INCREASES. FOR THIS REASON, WE MUST TAKE A SERIOUS AND CANDID VIEW OF OUR NEED TO REZONE OUR DOWNTOWN TO PROMOTE HIGHER AND BETTER LAND USE.**

**DESPITE THE ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY RESULTING FROM INCREASES IN THE COST OF ENERGY, THE DOWNTURN IN HOUSING, THE COST OF THE ONGOING WAR IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN AND THE FACT THAT NET STATE AID RECEIVED (AFTER FACTORING IN INFLATION) WAS STILL BELOW 2002 LEVELS, CITY SERVICES WERE MAINTAINED AND EXPANDED IN 2007.**

**EVEN WITH THE \$4.2 MILLION INCREASE IN THE FISCAL 2008 OPERATING BUDGET, PEABODY'S REAL ESTATE TAXES REMAIN WELL BELOW OTHER AREA COMMUNITIES. ALTHOUGH OUR PROPERTY TAXES ARE LOWER THAN OTHER AREA COMMUNITIES, PEABODY, LIKE MANY OTHER MUNICIPALITIES HAS HAD TO INCREASE PROPERTY TAXES**

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS TO MAKE UP CUTS IN STATE AID, (SINCE 2003 PROPERTY TAXES INCREASED 22% OR 3.7% ANNUALLY WHILE NET STATE AID INCREASED 6.9% OR 1.1% PER YEAR) TO MEET RISING HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS AND RISING ENERGY PRICES. PROPERTY TAXES NOW PROVIDE 55% OF OUR OPERATING REVENUE. PROPERTY TAXES ARE REGRESSIVE AND PLACE AN UNFAIR FINANCIAL BURDEN ON OUR SENIORS WHO LIVE ON FIXED INCOMES. TO HELP ELDERLY HOMEOWNERS, WE CONTINUE TO PROVIDE THREE TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAMS TO OUR SENIORS.

I WILL CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE FOR ADDITIONAL LOCAL AID SO THAT THE CITY DOES NOT HAVE TO RELY SOLELY ON PROPERTY TAXES TO FUND OPERATING BUDGETS IN THE FUTURE. I WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO PRESSURE OUR FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION TO ENSURE THAT THEY HELP US FIND EVERY DOLLAR AND APPLY FOR EVERY GRANT THAT MAY BENEFIT PEABODY AND ITS TAXPAYERS.

### FLOOD MITIGATION

JUST AS 2006 WILL BE REMEMBERED AS THE YEAR OF THE GREAT MOTHER'S DAY FLOOD, IT IS MY GREAT HOPE THAT 2007 WILL BE NOTED AS THE YEAR WE TOOK THE FIRST MAJOR STEPS TO MITIGATE OUR FLOODING PROBLEMS THROUGH SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS. WHY DO WE NEED TO FOCUS ON FIXING OUR FLOODING PROBLEM? UNTIL WE CHANGE THE PERCEPTION THAT OUR DOWNTOWN IS ALWAYS UNDERWATER WE WILL NOT ATTRACT THE INVESTMENT NEEDED TO REVITALIZE OUR COMMUNITY. FIXING THE DOWNTOWN FLOODING PROBLEM, REZONING THE AREA AND ADDRESSING THE TRAFFIC AND MAIN STREET CONCERNS ARE ALL LINKED TOGETHER, PART OF A WHOLE PLAN TO RENEW AND BRING LIFE AND VITALITY TO OUR DOWNTOWN. THE PLAN IS TO BRING BACK THIS ECONOMICALLY UNDESIRABLE, UNDERUTILIZED AREA AND TO MAKE IT A MORE ATTRACTIVE, MORE LIVABLE PLACE, AND A PLACE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY. THE FIRST STEP IN DOING THIS IS TO GIVE THE PUBLIC THE CONFIDENCE THAT WE WILL ALLEVIATE FLOODING.

SINCE THE MAY 2006 FLOOD, WE HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED OUR EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE FLOODING PROBLEM. WE HAVE TAKEN SEVERAL MAJOR STEPS TO DO SO, INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE \$20 MILLION FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT FOR THE DOWNTOWN AREA. PROJECT FUNDING HAS BEEN APPLIED FOR THROUGH STATE AND FEDERAL GRANTS AND WE HAVE EXTENSIVELY LOBBIED OUR STATE AND FEDERAL DELEGATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE. TO DATE WE HAVE RECEIVED SOME MODEST FINANCIAL HELP FROM THESE SOURCES FOR WHICH WE ARE GRATEFUL. DESPITE THE FACT THAT OUR MAJOR REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE STILL REMAINS UNFUNDED WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL RECEIVE ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. ALTHOUGH WE ARE DISAPPOINTED IN THE AMOUNT OF MONEY WE HAVE RECEIVED, WE ARE NOT DETERRED AND ARE DETERMINED TO REMEDY OUR FLOODING PROBLEM IN ORDER TO REVITALIZE OUR DOWNTOWN. TO THAT END THE CITY HAS CONTRIBUTED OVER \$3 MILLION IN FUNDING AND THE STATE HAS CONTRIBUTED \$2.5 MILLION. IN ADDITION TO THESE MONIES, WE HAVE EXPENDED AN ADDITIONAL \$1.5 MILLION ON CITY WIDE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS SINCE THE MAY 2006 FLOOD. WE HAVE ALSO ESTABLISHED A COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE THE FLOODING PROJECT, HIRED CONSULTANTS WHO HAVE DEVELOPED PLANS TO MITIGATE THE FLOODING PROBLEM, ARE WORKING ON OBTAINING EASEMENTS AND HAVE STARTED WORK ON REPAIRING AND REBUILDING 1,300 FEET OF THE NORTH RIVER WALL. WE ARE ALSO COORDINATING OUR EFFORTS TO CONTROL FLOODING WITH THE CITY OF SALEM.

I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT THE CITY OF PEABODY IS DOING ITS PART TO SOLVE ITS FLOODING PROBLEM AND IT IS MY HOPE THAT WITH FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

**FROM BOTH THE STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS WE WILL FINALLY RECTIFY THIS LONG TERM PROBLEM.**

### **DOWNTOWN GROWTH AND REDEVELOPMENT**

**AS A CITY WE HAVE TO, LIKE HAMLET, ANSWER THE QUESTION - TO BE OR NOT TO BE - THAT IS - DO WE MAINTAIN THE PRESENT STATUS QUO IN OUR DOWNTOWN OR DO WE MAKE IT SOMETHING BETTER?**

**BEFORE ANSWERING THAT QUESTION, I SUGGEST THAT YOU TAKE A STROLL DOWN THE RAILROAD TRACKS STARTING NEAR DUNKIN DONUTS ON CENTRAL STREET AND WALK ALL THE WAY TO THE STOP AND SHOP ON HOWLEY STREET. AFTER DOING SO I BELIEVE THAT YOU WILL AGREE THAT WE NEED TO CLEAN-UP, REDEVELOP AND REVITALIZE THIS UNDERUTILIZED AND BLIGHTED AREA.**

**WE OFTEN HEAR THAT TRAFFIC IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA IS ATROCIOUS AND THAT CROSSING THE STREET CAN BE NOTHING SHORT OF AN ADVENTURE. THE RECENTLY COMPLETED "MAIN STREET CORRIDOR" STUDY PROVIDES SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH, IF IMPLEMENTED, SHOULD HELP ALLEVIATE THE TRAFFIC AND SAFETY ISSUES ON MAIN STREET AND, HOPEFULLY, MAKE THE DOWNTOWN AREA SAFER AND MORE ATTRACTIVE TO SHOPPERS AND RESIDENTS. THESE IMPROVEMENTS WILL ALSO ENHANCE PROPERTY VALUES AND HELP LOCAL MERCHANTS. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THREE SERIOUS PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS RECENTLY OCCURRED ON MAIN STREET, I WILL BE SEEKING COUNCIL SUPPORT AND ADDITIONAL FUNDING NEEDED TO IMMEDIATELY IMPROVE THE LIGHTING AND CROSSWALKS IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA.**

### **OPEN SPACE**

**AN OFTEN HEARD LAMENT IS THAT OUR COMMUNITY IS BEING OVERDEVELOPED AND THAT WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF OPEN SPACE. I SHARE THIS CONCERN AND TO THAT END, LAST YEAR WE PURCHASED TILLIE'S FARM, 15 ACRES OF PRISTINE LAND LOCATED IN WARD 1. I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT THIS YEAR WE HAVE ACQUIRED SIDNEY'S POND AND 25 SURROUNDING ACRES OF LAND. WE PLAN ON BUILDING A WALKING TRAIL THAT CONNECTS THIS PROPERTY TO THE MEADOW GOLF COURSE AND SPRING POND. THIS SPRING, WE WILL START CONSTRUCTION ON THE 4.6 MILE LINEAR BIKE PATH WHICH WILL RUN THROUGH SOME OF PEABODY'S MOST BEAUTIFUL TRACKS OF RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE. WE HAVE ALSO TAKEN THE FIRST STEPS TO REVERSE THE EUTRIFICATION AND BEGIN THE RESTORATION OF CRYSTAL LAKE. TO THAT END, AND, IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUR STATE LEGISLATORS, WE HAVE APPLIED FOR AND RECEIVED, \$800,000 IN GRANTS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH'S DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION.**

**ONE OF THE REASONS I WANT TO REDEVELOP AND CLEAN-UP THE DOWNTOWN AREA IS THAT IT ALREADY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED AND THE INFRASTRUCTURE IS IN PLACE. IT MAKES MORE SENSE TO ME TO REVITALIZE THIS AREA THAN TO DEVELOP UNDEVELOPED PROPERTY WHICH WOULD BE BETTER USED FOR PASSIVE OPEN SPACE AND/OR RECREATION.**

### **ASSISTED LIVING CENTER**

**DEMOGRAPHICALLY, APPROXIMATELY 20 PERCENT OF PEABODY'S RESIDENTS ARE 60 YEARS OR OLDER. FURTHERMORE, THE FASTEST GROWING SEGMENT OF OUR POPULATION IS IN THE OVER 75 YEAR OLD CATEGORY, WHICH HAS INCREASED ABOUT**

59% IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS. PEABODY HAS RECOGNIZED THESE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES AND SEVERAL YEARS AGO BUILT AND NOW OPERATES A FIRST CLASS SENIOR CENTER. AS OUR POPULATION AGES, THE NEEDS OF OUR SENIORS ALSO CHANGE. THESE NEEDS INCLUDE PROVIDING ADDITIONAL DAY CARE AND AFFORDABLE ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES. LAST YEAR I RECOMMENDED THAT WE BUILD AN AFFORDABLE ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY AT THE TORIGIAN COMMUNITY LIFE CENTER. FUNDING AVAILABILITY, CONCERN ABOUT LOSS OF SOME PARKING AND THE MISCONCEPTION THAT PARK LAND WOULD BE USED ON WHICH TO BUILD THE FACILITY STALLED THIS WORTHY PROJECT. MANY OF OUR ELDERS NEED ASSISTED LIVING AID YET DO NOT HAVE THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO OBTAIN THIS CARE. OUR SENIORS HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT AND DESERVE TO LIVE OUT THEIR LIVES IN DIGNITY. I WILL CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE FOR, AND WITH YOUR HELP, BUILD THIS ESSENTIAL FACILITY. TO THAT END A COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY FATHER ANDREW DEMONSTES HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AND WILL BE PRESENTING A PROPOSAL FOR COUNCIL REVIEW THIS SPRING.

## EDUCATION

IN 2007 WE CONTINUED TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN MOVING OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM FORWARD. OUR SCHOOL BUDGET FOR FISCAL 2007 WAS INCREASED BY 3.1%, AND THERE WERE NO STAFF OR PROGRAM REDUCTIONS WHILE CLASS SIZES DECREASED.

IN ADDITION TO THE 3.1% INCREASE IN THE SCHOOL BUDGET, SEVERAL CAPITAL PROJECTS WERE COMPLETED, INCLUDING: RECONDITIONING TWO ELEVATORS AND REPLACING BLEACHERS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL; INSTALLING A PEDESTRIAN SAFETY LIGHT AT THE NEW CAPTAIN SAMUEL BROWN SCHOOL, REPAIRING AND REPLACING OUTSIDE MASONRY AT THE CENTER SCHOOL, REPAIRING AND REPLACING EXTERIOR LIGHTING AT BOTH THE HIGH SCHOOL AND THE WELCH SCHOOL AND PURCHASING AND INSTALLING NEW COMPUTER EQUIPMENT AND UPGRADES DISTRICT-WIDE.

WE ARE ALSO WORKING ON WAYS TO PROVIDE BETTER SCHOOL SECURITY DISTRICT WIDE THROUGH IMPROVED EXTERIOR LIGHTING AND THE USE OF SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY. OVERALL IN 2007 WE SPENT OVER ONE MILLION DOLLARS ON SCHOOL PROJECTS.

AT THE HIGH SCHOOL, THE HVAC PROJECT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED AND WE ARE NOW WORKING ON THE FIRE SUPPRESSION AND ADA PROJECTS. WE ANTICIPATE COMPLETING ALL OF THE HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECTS BY YEAR-END 2008.

IN JUNE OF 2007 WE DRAFTED AND SUBMITTED TWO "STATEMENTS OF INTEREST" TO THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY, OR MSBA, FOR THE RENOVATION AND UPGRADING OF THE HIGGINS MIDDLE SCHOOL AND THE CENTER SCHOOL. AS A RESULT OF LIMITED FUNDING THE MSBA REQUESTED WE PRIORITIZE WHICH SCHOOL WE WANT TO FIX FIRST. WE CHOSE TO FOCUS FIRST ON THE HIGGINS MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR MYRIAD REASONS INCLUDING: THE TYPES AND NATURE OF THE RENOVATIONS NEEDED, THE FACT THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WOULD BENEFIT FROM THE REPAIRS AND THAT WE FELT THAT THE MSBA WOULD LOOK MORE FAVORABLE UPON FUNDING REPAIRS TO THE LARGEST MIDDLE SCHOOL IN THE STATE. AS BOTH SCHOOLS NEED TO BE UPGRADED WE HAVE TAKEN IMMEDIATE STEPS TO MAKE REPAIRS AT THE CENTER SCHOOL TOTALING APPROXIMATELY \$800,000. THE REASON FOR THIS DECISION IS THAT THE LIMITED FUNDS WE HAVE AVAILABLE WOULD HAVE A GREATER IMPACT ON FIXING THE REPAIRS NEEDED AT THE CENTER SCHOOL.

**ALTHOUGH OUR REQUEST FOR MSBA FUNDING HAS BEEN PUT ON HOLD PENDING DIRECTION ON CH 74 PROGRAMS, WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL RECEIVE MSBA FUNDING IN THE NEAR FUTURE.**

**I AM PLEASED TO REPORT THAT OUR MCAS SCORES IMPROVED OVERALL IN 2007 AND THAT THEY EXCEED THE STATE AVERAGE IN MOST AREAS; HOWEVER, I AM STILL NOT SATISFIED WITH OUR PRESENT SCORES. TO IMPROVE THESE SCORES WE NEED TO INCREASE INSTRUCTIONAL TIME AND MUST CONTINUE TO ADDRESS THE FUNDAMENTAL TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF OUR STUDENTS, PARTICULARLY THOSE STUDENT IN THE SUB-GROUPS IDENTIFIED AS ACADEMIC PROBLEM AREAS. WE NEED TO REPRIORITIZE OUR GOALS AND SPENDING AND DEVOTE MORE RESOURCES TO IMPROVE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN THESE AREAS.**

**A RECENT REVIEW OF STUDENT ENROLLMENT NUMBERS DISCLOSES A STEADY DECLINE IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS. STUDENT ENROLLMENTS HAVE DECLINED BY 400 STUDENTS FROM 2003 TO 2007, YET THE NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENCY TEACHERS HAS INCREASED BY OVER 50 FOR THE SAME PERIOD.**

**THIS DECLINE IN ENROLLMENTS IS PROJECTED TO CONTINUE.**

**GIVEN THE MINIMAL INCREASES IN STATE CHAPTER 70 AID AND OTHER BUDGET CONSTRAINTS, THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEEDS TO MAKE SOME TOUGH FINANCIAL DECISIONS AND SET SOME NEW PRIORITIES. DO WE LEAVE THINGS AS THEY ARE, TRADING SMALLER CLASS SIZE OVER OTHER PRESSING NEEDS.... SUCH AS PROVIDING BETTER TECHNOLOGY OR NEW BOOKS, OR ADDITIONAL MCAS REMEDIAL HELP TO POORER PERFORMING SUBGROUPS, OR DO WE LOOK AT CONSOLIDATING FACILITIES OR ....REDISTRICTING THUS FREEING UP ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES WHICH WE CAN THEN APPLY TOWARD OTHER , MORE PRESSING PRIORITIES? BEFORE WE ASK FOR MORE FUNDING WE NEED TO REPRIORITIZE AND REALLOCATE EXISTING RESOURCES. IT IS NO LONGER FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE TO HAVE OUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO.**

**WE NEED TO EXPLORE BEING MORE COST EFFECTIVE BY ELIMINATING DUPLICATION OF EFFORT AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY BOTH THE CITY AND SCHOOL DEPARTMENT. DO WE REALLY NEED TO HAVE TWO HUMAN RESOURCE, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL DEPARTMENTS? I HAVE COMMISSIONED A STUDY TO ANALYZE**

**THIS QUESTION AND WILL PRESENT THE FINDINGS TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION. I WILL ALSO CONTINUE MY EFFORTS TO HIRE A FACILITIES MANAGER TO ASSIST THE MAYOR AND SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN SUPERVISING AND MANAGING ALL CITY BUILDINGS.**

**I AM PROUD OF OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM AND PLEASED WITH THE PROGRESS MADE TO STRENGTHEN IT OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS NEED TO DIFFERENTIATE AND NOT EQUATE THE DIFFERENCES THAT HAVE OCCURRED BETWEEN POLITICAL OPPONENTS AND THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED IN PEABODY. SIMPLY LOOK AT THE FACTS, WE ARE NOT LAYING-OFF STAFF, OUR BUDGETS HAVE INCREASED, CLASS SIZE IS DIMINISHING, WE HAVE ALL DAY KINDERGARTEN --- AT NO CHARGE, WE HAVE FULL TIME NURSES IN EVERY SCHOOL, AND OUR MCAS SCORES ARE IMPROVING. THE APPENDIX TO THIS SPEECH CONTAINS NUMEROUS ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS WE HAVE MADE JUST THIS PAST YEAR TO OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM. I AM CONFIDENT THAT WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN BUILD ON THESE SUCCESSES AND MAKE AN ALL READY GOOD SCHOOL SYSTEM EVEN BETTER.**

## PUBLIC SAFETY

I AM PROUD OF OUR PUBLIC SAFETY PEOPLE AND THANK THEM FOR THE GREAT JOB THEY DO EVERYDAY. A LIST OF SOME OF THE MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS MADE IN THE PUBLIC SAFETY AREA IS CONTAINED IN THE APPENDIX TO THIS SPEECH. UNLIKE MANY OTHER MUNICIPALITIES WE HAVE NOT LAID OFF A SINGLE FIREFIGHTER OR POLICE OFFICER. IN 2007 WE APPOINTED 7 PERMANENT FIREFIGHTERS, SIX OF WHOM WILL BE GOING TO THE FIRE ACADEMY IN JANUARY AND ONE ATTENDING IN MARCH. WE ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF APPOINTING SEVERAL FIREFIGHTER RESERVES. LAST YEAR AN ADDITIONAL FIRE CAPTAIN'S POSITION WAS CREATED AND GIVEN THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAINING. SUBSEQUENTLY, EXTENSIVE TRAINING HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN SEVERAL AREAS RANGING FROM BASIC FIRE FIGHTING TECHNIQUES TO HOMELAND SECURITY ISSUES. AS A RESULT OF THE CONCERN OVER CHEMICAL AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS STORAGE AN ADDITIONAL FIRE INSPECTOR POSITION WAS CREATED TO MONITOR THIS AREA FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SAFETY AND CODE REQUIREMENTS. A NEW PUMPER TRUCK HAS BEEN OBTAINED AND PUT INTO OPERATION.

FOUR PERMANENT POLICE OFFICERS WERE HIRED IN 2007 AND HAVE RECENTLY GRADUATED FROM THE POLICE ACADEMY AND ARE NOW ON REGULAR DUTY. IN ADDITION, THREE POLICE RESERVE OFFICERS WERE APPOINTED IN 2007, INCLUDING TWO FEMALE OFFICERS. IN A DIVERSE SOCIETY WE NEED A DIVERSE WORK FORCE IF WE ARE TO EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY MANAGE THE COMPLEX PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES WE FACE. BY HIRING ADDITIONAL FEMALE OFFICERS WE HAVE TAKEN SOME STEPS IN MEETING THIS NEED FOR DIVERSITY. WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF APPOINTING EIGHT MORE RESERVE OFFICERS.

DURING THE YEAR THE POLICE DISPATCH CENTER WAS UPGRADED AND A REVERSE 911 SYSTEM WAS PURCHASED AND WILL BE IN FULL OPERATION WITHIN THE MONTH. THIS SYSTEM WILL ALLOW PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL TO COMMUNICATE QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY WITH OUR RESIDENTS IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES

OVER \$1,300,000 WAS EXPENDED IN 2007 ON STREET AND SIDEWALK REPAVING. SOME OF THE STREETS AND THEIR SIDEWALKS REPAVED THIS YEAR INCLUDED: ROBERTS ROAD, WENTWORTH ROAD, WAGNER STREET, BEACON STREET, CHARLOTTE STREET, CARELL ROAD, CARDIGAN ROAD, DANIEL TERRACE, FORENZA ROAD AND PARTS OF LAKE STREET AND MOULTON ROAD. DPS COMPLETED THE CONSTRUCTION OF OVER \$750,000 IN DRAINAGE REPAIRS CITY-WIDE AND ALSO COMPLETED THE PROGRAM STARTED IN 2005 TO REPLACE ALL STREET SIGNS THROUGHOUT THE CITY WITH NEW SIGNS THAT PROVIDE GREATER VISIBILITY. DPS ALSO RESPONDED TO AND COMPLETED OVER 3,000 WORK REQUESTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

AS PROMISED LAST YEAR, A PART-TIME CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER WAS HIRED TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH VARIOUS CODE REQUIREMENTS. A PROGRAM TO REVIEW ALL FALA'S WAS ESTABLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY THE COMPLIANCE OFFICER.

WE HAVE SECURED \$401,000 IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS, WHICH WERE USED FOR HOUSING REHABILITATION FOR 34 LOW TO MODERATE INCOME PEABODY HOUSEHOLDS WHO WITHOUT THIS ASSISTANCE WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO KEEP-UP WITH NEEDED REPAIRS. THE CITY'S FIRST TIME HOMEBUYERS PROGRAM

**PROVIDED DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE TO 18 FAMILIES ENABLING THEM TO PURCHASE THEIR FIRST HOME. TO SUPPORT NEW BUSINESS GROWTH IN PEABODY, PEABODY'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY PROVIDED LOANS TOTALING APPROXIMATELY \$250,000 IN 2007. THIS FUNDING ALLOWED THREE BUSINESSES TO EXPAND OR LOCATE IN PEABODY.**

**DUE IN LARGE PART TO OUR POSITIVE BUSINESS ATTITUDE AND FAVORABLE TAX RATE, BUSINESSES CONTINUE TO LOCATE AND GROW IN PEABODY. LAHEY CLINIC IS PRESENTLY ADDING A 63,000 SQUARE FOOT ADDITION TO ITS EXISTING BUILDING WHILE THE NORTH SHORE MALL IS UNDERGOING SUBSTANTIAL RENOVATION. SOME OF THE NEW BUSINESSES THAT OPENED OR EXPANDED IN PEABODY THIS YEAR INCLUDE: THE CHEESECAKE FACTORY, NORTH SHORE BANK, BMW ON ROUTE #114 AND NUMEROUS MEDICAL RELATED BUSINESSES IN THE CENTENNIAL PARK. THE 2<sup>ND</sup> PHASE OF PEABODY CROSSING, WOODBRIDGE ASSISTED LIVING, FAIRFIELD APARTMENTS AND THE RESIDENCES AT THE OLD BROWN SCHOOL WERE ALSO COMPLETED.**

**SOME OF THE MANY FUTURE PROJECTS IN THE WORKS INCLUDE: AN INDOOR SPORTS/RECREATION COMPLEX ON ROUTE #1 SOUTH, A NEW POST OFFICE ON WALLIS STREET, A CVS ON MAIN STREET, AN ANCHOR RESTAURANT AT THE NORTH SHORE MALL, WITH NORDSTROMS TO FOLLOW, ROSE'S BAKERY IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA AND REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FINE AND REMIS SITES ON LYNNFIELD STREET.**

### **NORTH SHORE COALITION**

**RECOGNIZING THAT MANY PROBLEMS FACING PEABODY ARE THE SAME PROBLEMS OTHER AREA COMMUNITIES FACE AND THAT THESE PROBLEMS NEED REGIONAL SOLUTIONS, A REGIONAL ORGANIZATION CALLED "THE NORTH SHORE COALITION" WAS ESTABLISHED IN LATE 2006. THE PURPOSE OF THIS COALITION IS FOR AREA MUNICIPALITIES TO COME TOGETHER AND TO WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE COMPLEX REGIONAL ISSUES. SOME OF THE ISSUES BEING ADDRESSED ARE: MUTUAL AID, REVENUE SHARING, HEALTH INSURANCE, TRAFFIC AND GANG RELATED PROBLEMS.**

**THIS YEAR, THROUGH REGIONAL PLANNING AND COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH OTHER AREA COMMUNITIES, WE WERE AGAIN SUCCESSFUL IN ADDRESSING THE HALLOWEEN TRAFFIC PROBLEM.**

### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

**THE LACK OF ADEQUATE HEALTH INSURANCE BY MILLIONS OF AMERICANS IS A NATIONAL SCANDAL AS IS THE CONTINUING ESCALATION OF THE COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE. THESE COSTS HAVE NOT ONLY PRECLUDED MILLIONS OF AMERICANS FROM OBTAINING HEALTH INSURANCE BUT HAVE PREVENTED MANY BUSINESSES FROM PROVIDING IT OR FORCING THEM TO LIMIT IT IN SOME MANNER. ALTHOUGH THIS IS A NATIONAL ISSUE IT HAS HAD A SERIOUS FINANCIAL IMPACT ON OUR CITY. THE COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THE CITY OF PEABODY AND ITS TAXPAYERS IS ASTRONOMICAL AT \$20.3 MILLION OR 17.5% OF THE FISCAL 2008 BUDGET. CURRENTLY, THE CITY IS IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ALL OF ITS 14 UNIONS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO ASK FOR UNION COOPERATION TO IMPLEMENT CHANGES TO THE CURRENT HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN DESIGNS. IF THERE ARE NO CHANGES IN THE PLAN CONTRIBUTION OR BENEFIT LEVELS, GIVEN LIMITED RESOURCES, THE CITY CANNOT AFFORD TO FUND THE ESCALATING COST OF BENEFITS INTO THE FUTURE WITHOUT MATERIALLY IMPACTING STAFFING LEVELS OR SALARY INCREASES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK SOLUTIONS TO THIS PRESSING PROBLEM INCLUDING EXPLORING PARTICIPATION IN THE GIC PLANS**

**AND/OR, IF NECESSARY, REQUESTING A HOME RULE PETITION TO CHANGE CONTRIBUTION LEVELS, AS I PROPOSED THREE YEARS AGO.**

### **DRUG PROBLEM**

**AS I HAVE PROMISED WE HAVE STAYED FOCUSED ON THE DRUG ISSUE THAT HAS BESIEGED OUR NATION, STATE AND COMMUNITY. THROUGH AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT WE CONTINUE THE BATTLE AGAINST THIS PLAGUE. MANY PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED IN OUR SCHOOLS TO HELP COMBAT THIS PLAGUE AND OUR POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS STEPPED UP ITS ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES. IN MID-JANUARY OF 2007 THE CITY SPONSORED A DRUG RECOGNITION ACADEMY. THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROGRAM WAS TO HELP ANSWER THE OFTEN HEARD PARENTAL QUESTION "I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR". WE WILL BE PROVIDING EDUCATIONAL AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS AGAIN IN 2008. I AGAIN PLEDGE TO YOU THAT I WILL WORK HARD EVERY DAY TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE.**

### **PEABODY ACCESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**PEABODY ACCESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC., (PAT), WENT INTO FULL OPERATION IN EARLY 2007. PAT WAS ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE EXPANDED LOCAL ACCESS PROGRAMMING INCLUDING: COVERAGE OF CITY COUNCIL AND SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS, VARIOUS CITY AND SCHOOL EVENTS ALONG WITH MORE CITIZENS GENERATED PROGRAMMING. PAT IS LOCATED IN A STATE OF THE ART STUDIO AT 119R FOSTER STREET.**

### **GEORGE PEABODY MUSEUM**

**ON JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup> WE WILL BREAK GROUND ON THE NEW LEATHER WORKERS MUSEUM. THE NEW MUSEUM WILL BE BUILT AT THE EXISTING GEORGE PEABODY HOUSE MUSEUM PROPERTY ON WASHINGTON STREET. A BARN ORIGINALLY STOOD ON THAT PROPERTY. THE NEW LEATHER WORKERS MUSEUM WILL RECALL THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE BARN AND WILL BE USED TO HONOR THE MANY WORKERS WHO MADE PEABODY THE LEATHER CAPITOL OF THE WORLD.**

**AS A RESULT OF OUR PRUDENT LEADERSHIP, OUR CITY STANDS STRONG. AS MAYOR, I CONTINUE MY PLEDGE TO LEAD IN AN OPEN AND FAIR MANNER. I WILL HOLD TRUE TO THE TIME HONORED PRINCIPLES REGARDING FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY, A STRONG VALUE SYSTEM AND CONSERVATIVE, YET RESPONSIVE, PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENT. THIS IS MY COMMITMENT TO YOU THAT THESE VALUES WILL CONTINUE TO GUIDE OUR COMMUNITY AND BE USED TO SHAPE OUR CITY IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION.**

**ALTHOUGH I PLEDGE TO DO MY BEST FOR YOU AND FOR THE CITY, I CAN'T DO IT ALONE. I NEED YOUR HELP AND SUPPORT. TO MOVE OUR CITY FORWARD WE MUST DO IT TOGETHER. WITH YOUR HELP, WE WILL:**

- MITIGATE THE FLOODING PROBLEM IN PEABODY.**
- ADVOCATE TO COMPLETE THE REZONING PROJECT.... ALLOWING FOR CONTROLLED GROWTH AND DESIGN REVIEW.**
- REDEVELOP BUT NOT OVERDEVELOP THE DOWNTOWN AREA.**
- BUILD A 40 - 50 UNIT ASSISTED LIVING PROJECT AT THE TORIGIAN CENTER.**

- **IMPROVE OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM SPECIFICALLY IN THE AREA OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.**
- **CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND UPGRADE OUR PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE; AND**
- **MAINTAIN OUR STRONG RESERVE POSITION.**

**THESE ARE BUT A FEW OF THE MANY GOALS WE WANT TO ACCOMPLISH OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS.**

**IT HAS BEEN AN HONOR TO SERVE YOU AS YOUR MAYOR FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS AND TODAY, AS WE BEGIN ANOTHER TERM TOGETHER – LET’S PLEDGE TO CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER AND MOVE THIS CITY FORWARD. LET US PLEDGE OUR COMMITMENT TO ENSURE THE VERY BRIGHTEST FUTURE FOR THE YOUNG AND OLD, AND FOR ALL OF OUR CITIZENS. WE CAN DO NO LESS. FOR MY PART, I RENEW THE PROMISE I MADE TO THE CITIZENS OF PEABODY 6 YEARS AGO WHEN I FIRST BECAME YOUR MAYOR – THE PROMISE TO BUILD A BETTER, STRONGER PEABODY.**

**IF WE SUCCEED IN THESE ENDEAVORS WE SUCCEED IN THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF DEFINING A PEABODY IN WHICH OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WILL LIVE IN A SAFE, VIBRANT AND DIVERSE CITY. A COMMUNITY OF OPPORTUNITY, FAIRNESS AND PROSPERITY FOR ALL, WITH A QUALITY OF LIFE THAT WEAVES COMMUNITY SPIRIT INTO THE LIVES OF OUR CITIZENS AND PREPARES OUR CHILDREN TO COMPETE AND SUCCEED IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY.**

**WITH YOUR SUPPORT AND WITH GOD’S BLESSING TOGETHER WE CAN KEEP THIS PROMISE AND MAKE PEABODY A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK.**

**THANK YOU.**