

Accomplishments, Not Empty Promises

Let Me Share The Real Narrative With You

Anyone who follows the news about Mount Vernon knows there is a negative narrative that produces sensationalized headlines.

Unfortunately, headlines about garbage trucks running out of fuel or snowplows sabotaged with latex gloves in their gas tanks distract us from the real accomplishments that Mount Vernon can and should celebrate.

Additionally, the news media isn't necessarily interested in Mount Vernon's successes and these stories aren't highlighted in print or on television like they should be. So, in the spirit of bringing balance to imbalance, allow me to share some of the many successes that are irrefutable.

Let's start with streetlights and our environment. Earlier this year Mount Vernon finished replacing over 4,500 old streetlights with new energy efficient LED lights. The streetlight upgrade and replacement will save Mount Vernon taxpayers at least \$776,000 annually while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2,500 tons a year—the equivalent of taking 530 cars off the road.

We are uniting our City again by opening decade-closed MTA bridges. After much lobbying by my administration, I'm pleased to confirm that the agency increased its investment in Mount Vernon from \$10 million to \$80 million, replacing six bridges by 2027. One will open by early July.

There's more investment on the way. Last year I presented a plan that involves the New York State Power Authority investing approximately \$13 million (with financing costs included) into upgrading both City Hall and the courthouse with new windows, lights and heating and cooling systems.

We've also uplifted our City's youth. From new programs like job training to scholarships, I'm proud to have increase the amount of kids hired for summer jobs to 200 from 85 despite rising wages.

For our graduating high school students, we recently hosted a series of promenades at City Hall, where the seniors could walk a red carpet and take photos. Last week I surprised Mount Vernon High School seniors by bringing Dennis Rodman to their promenade.

We've revived baseball by growing Little League from 30 to over 300 players, most recently earning a \$50,000 grant from Major League Baseball for Brush Park upgrades.

We're taking back our neighborhoods by slaying "zombie" homes. We have assessed almost \$8 million in fines to banks that own derelict "zombie" homes in the City. I fully anticipate taking City ownership of these properties to sell off to middle-class home buyers to stabilize neighborhoods.

Homeowners doing business with our Building Department also have reason to be optimistic. On average about \$1.2 billion in construction investment was recently processed and review time for paperwork decreased 60%. We have come far and are looking to get better.

Crime is also down. Serious crimes fell from a reported 1,207 incidents in 2012 to 708 in 2018, a 42% decline.

As a result of all the hard work by police, median home sales prices have increased by 24% in the past year, the economy grew by 11% and quality of life has gotten stronger.

Yet we will all be judged on how we treat and care for the most vulnerable. The Mayor's Healthy Home Initiative has fed the hungry by setting up a fresh market to provide seasonal fruit and vegetables directly to Mount Vernon residents. Every two weeks up to 25,000 pounds (the equivalent of 9,500 meals) of fruit and vegetables are distributed to families. To date, more than 540,000 pounds of fresh nutritious food has been provided to hungry families across Mount Vernon.

This is a sampling of what's been done for the people. The fact is we can do even more with cooperation over confrontation. Let's elevate and keep Mount Vernon moving forward.