As the City’s Mayor, it is my responsibility to address our residents and report on the State of our City.

While this annual summary informs the public about our city at a basic level, I also see it as an opportunity to invigorate ideas and motivate our residents to stand up and be a part of the municipal machinery that can propel a city along a path to greatness.

As I prepared for this speech, I realized that I am in a unique position to do so.

Although I am just 100 days into my **elected** term of office, it is one full year — April 25, to be exact — that I have had the privilege to serve our city as its Mayor.

I have had the chance to witness our city from two distinct perspectives:

one from my role as Mayor — seeing all our interactions and watching the fundamentals of city hall at work — and the other at ground level, up.

I’ve had the opportunity throughout my time in Revere to speak up close and personal with residents, families, city staff, and community groups, sharing struggles and concerns on the path toward solutions.

I am inspired by what I see.

Assessing all that has happened in this one year, and all that is happening in our city, and all that is about to happen in the months ahead, I can tell you this:

Our City of Revere is indeed on a path to greatness. And so tonight, this is a call to everyone to play a role as our city races toward the kind of achievement and prominence that for decades has been little more than a dream — if we even dared to dream.

Two themes dominate this message:

One is “optimism”, and the other is “unity.”

They express harmonious concepts, for each evolves from the other.

•                 “Optimism” involves a favorable perspective of our circumstances and a similarly favorable view of our future.

•                 “Optimism” involves confidence, a willingness to take on challenges firm in the belief that we will achieve success, and our city will benefit from that success.

•                 “Optimism” involves a resistance against obstacles, against self-imposed limitations and, ultimately, a top-to-bottom rejection of negativity.

•                 “Unity” involves sharing that optimism.

As we free ourselves from what holds us back, we will empower one another to make Revere a more desirable home for families, for seniors, for businesses, and for all those who have arrived here seeking opportunity, prosperity, and a better future for the next generation.

We watched “optimism” and “unity” work hand and hand the very first month of this Administration, when our City Council in January took the bold and decisive action to approve the construction of the new Revere High School at the site of the former Wonderland dog track.

With our city’s collaboration, we were able to progress, together.

•                 The Council’s vote — one of the most important they will ever make — required political valor and positive foresight.  That is **Optimism**, and we commend the Council’s courage.

•                 This Vote clarified our commitment to our public school system.

The decision to construct the school and preserve the current site for future needs of our community was the right decision, and even those who expressed a different opinion agree that now we must move forward from here and get this job done.

This entire project is **and will continue to be** a perfect example of collaboration, involving the Mayor’s office, the City Council, the School Committee, the Student Senate, and the hundreds of residents who came and expressed their ideas.

We all navigated through different opinions and prioritized concerns, and ultimately made a decision that is best for our people and, most important, for our children.

•                 That is **Unity**.

The prospect of a new high school is but one symbol of our progress and our future.

Revere is a growing city and, more importantly, has become the attractive hub of the Greater Boston area.

It has been to our city’s benefit.

The average assessed value of a single-family home has increased 66 percent since 2018.

This provides value and equity for those who live here and indicates that people see Revere as a place to set deep roots.

At the same time, underused land across our city has become reinvigorated by modern development and a new source of tax revenue.

A prime example of this is taking shape along our Riverfront, where a new residential complex has replaced a Towering Metal Hanger and Tow Yard, where we will soon see the renovation of Gibson Park, the creation of a community boating facility, along with resiliency measures that will utilize over 3.3 million dollars in state, local and federal funding.

During the past fifteen years, we have watched a reinvestment in Revere, which has refreshed our atmosphere: Our waterfront has provided a source of new value, rich with bustling restaurants and lively residential districts.

With our scenic beach, eclectic activities, events, and our new businesses, Revere is finally attracting a share of the Boston tourist economy.

•                 Recently constructed hotels in our city generated more than $3 million dollars in rooms taxes in the last fiscal year, and at least two more hotels will open by next year, creating more growth with little demand on our public resources.

•                 Tourists form over 60 countries and each of our 50 states have joined our residents and flocked to our events such as the annual Sand Sculpting Festival, the Revere Beach PRIDE Celebration, and other popular activities held in conjunction with the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

And while our City has flourished, we are not finished.  In 2023 alone, our Building Department issued over 1600 permits, indicating investment in our city through new construction and revitalization of existing properties.

Revere’s evolution is signified not only in residential development, but —

more telling — in commercial development as well.

For decades, the city’s two largest commercial employers were racetracks— (Suffolk Downs and Wonderland).  When those closed, our commercial tax base plummeted, and our largest employer was a supermarket.  That is no longer the case.

Over the past decade, we have taken an aggressive approach to expand and diversify the city’s vital commercial tax base.

Our unique location near Logan Airport, our three public transportation hubs, and our three-mile crescent beachfront distinguish Revere from all other municipalities in Greater Boston and helped cultivate a robust commercial development pipeline responsive to the immense regional demand.

Revere has become rich with new industry and opportunity, thanks to a variety of enterprises, from thriving small businesses to some of the largest companies on earth. Revere access to Downtown Boston, the Seaport, Logan airport and our natural seascape make Revere the premier geographic location North of Boston.

Today, Revere is home to two Amazon facilities, a model of the current national commercial standard, employing more than 600 people.

The development of Suffolk Downs, one of the largest mixed-use projects in Massachusetts history, is well underway. This will deliver nearly six-million gross square feet of commercial, residential, and recreational space on the 52 acres located in Revere.  The first step of the Suffolk Downs undertaking is nearing completion:

Amaya, a contemporary structure that will include some 24,000 square feet of ground-level retail space along with residences set to open this June.

During the next dozen years, we will see at Suffolk Downs the construction of an Innovation Center, hotels, office buildings, restaurants, and other retail space.

While Suffolk Downs will be the site of more than 500,000 square feet of research and development space, equally impressive is the transformation of the oil tank farms along Lee Burbank Highway.

Have you driven past there lately?

Most of the oil tanks are gone, and environmental remediation work is well underway in preparation for over 600,000 square feet of technology warehouse space operated by Link Logistics.

Our commercial growth also includes a thriving small business community — the lifeblood of a strong city.

Over 40 prospective businesses are working in concert with our Department of Planning and Community Development, looking to open doors along our commercial corridors of Shirley Avenue, Broadway, and Squire Road.  At the same time, city hall is working with existing businesses to revitalize and improve their storefronts and properties.

It would be a speech unto itself to go through every significant development ongoing or coming soon to the City of Revere.

Suffice to say, we are a city advancing into a new and exciting time, a period during which I am confident we will shed, once and for all, the unfair reputation and attitudes that have burdened Revere for too long.

The good and hardworking people who live here deserve nothing less!

Revere’s growth has allowed our municipal government to expand the services that help improve everyone’s quality of life.

•                 Our Revere-311 Constituent services hotline has matured into a reliable connection between our residents and City Hall.

•                 Last year, 311 handled nearly 30,000 calls, an average of 81 calls per day, addressing everything from potholes and sidewalk repair, to information about municipal events, snow removal, to assistance in navigating various departments of local and state government.

•                 Our Elder Affairs Department has made the Senior Center a beehive of activity and information for our Seniors.

•                 On any given day our seniors enjoy Bingo, pickleball, bocce, dancing, cooking classes, arts, exercise and yoga classes — :)

*frankly, I wish I had the energy to keep up with all the recreational activities that our Elder Affairs department offers for our seniors.*

•                 But, more important than just recreation, our Elder Affairs department provides a welcoming network for seniors to meet and enjoy one another’s company and stay connected to our City.

•                 Similarly, our Revere Public Library, even at 122 years young, is as vital as ever and has become a dynamic center for learning and resources for all our residents.

•                 As our population has diversified, the library has expanded its English as a Second Language class to four days per week.

•                 For our younger residents, the Library hosts book clubs, creative writing groups, and Lego clubs.

•                 Adults and children have access to computers, headsets, telescopes, binoculars and — through a recent collaboration among the Library, and retailer L.L. Bean — residents will be able to borrow camping gear and other outdoor items.

•                 Meanwhile, the library’s expansive online resources provide access to a vast array of tutorials, career training, music, research platforms, and countless other sources of information.

• Oh — and just like we all remember ... the library *still* circulates books — nearly 2000 per month on average.

•                 Our Recreation Department is a year-round source of activity, sports programs, and other physically geared pursuits.

•                 The Recreation Department administers popular pre-school programs that include innovative classes such as “Little Chef” cooking and story time art.

•                 There are Youth sports leagues such as basketball,

dodgeball, soccer, volleyball, and a full array of outdoor activities

•                 There are programs in martial arts, and Adaptive Learning, events that include residents of all abilities, ages and genders.

•                 The Recreation Department operates the George V. Colella Community Center at the Garfield School that includes a swimming pool, auditorium and classroom space.

•                 And our community is rapidly acquainting itself and enjoying the newest and most ambitious feature of our Recreation Department, the Haas Fitness and Wellness Center, a modern recreational facility that includes state of the art fitness equipment, group exercise classes, and other amenities to stimulate our residents through exercise of the mind and body.

•                 Revere offers a lineup of recreation activities and resources for residents young and old that exceeds any surrounding community.

My fellow residents:

you deserve it!

•                 We continue to invest in our Public Works Department, not only with the recent opening of our New Public Works facility, but with renewed investment in equipment and a full complement of employees to facilitate and maximize our mission to serve the needs of our residents.

•                 Our commitment to public safety has never wavered and continues to increase.

•                 Later this year, we will see the long-anticipated opening of the new Point of Pines fire station that will house a new pumper truck, and we will put into service a new Engine 4 pumper and a new Ladder 1 truck at the Parkway station.

•                 Staffing levels in our fire department and police department are the highest in decades.

•                 As recently as 2016, Revere’s firefighting force numbered 94.

Today, we are budgeted for 120, and will grow to a new high in our next budget proposal, just last week we swore in 12 new firefighters a historic day in our city, and in just a few short months will unveil the long awaited Point of Pines fire station with our John Powers Community Room.

•                 Our police department currently numbers 107 officers, with two trainees scheduled to graduate from the police academy in the next month, and we anticipate up to six officers to begin the police Academy in May.

Our force is well trained and equipped to meet the demands of our community's needs.

•                 Of course, when it comes to our First Responders and their emergency equipment, we pray we never need it, but we are reassured knowing it is there for the inevitable times that we do, and we know they will always answer our call.

Quite simply we sleep easier knowing we have these fine men and women to protect our community.

To our first responders in the room this evening please stand for your well deserved acknowledgment....

.... Thank you

Throughout its history, Revere was identified as a place for working-class families to settle and thrive.

Revere was home to the people who formed our city’s soul:

teachers and school staff;

city hall workers;

hard-working employees in the hospitality industry;

public safety personnel, laborers,

and countless more residents who are the foundation of a strong and tight-knit community.

And though we tout our current growth and have every reason to be proud of it, we realize that escalating cost impose burdens on our longtime residents and create financial obstacles for those who want to live here.

It is a fact that Revere is not immune to the region’s escalating housing costs.  Economic and demographic changes throughout the northeast have propelled rising rents and home ownership has become a challenge to our working class.

This endangers Revere’s character and sense of community, and so it is our obligation to deal with the unique challenges that come along with prosperity.

**We understand this.**

Accordingly, we will explore every opportunity to alleviate that financial strain and keep Revere affordable for our Seniors and attractive to those seeking to settle here.

Programs such as:

•                 the Senior water rate abatement,

•                 the Elderly disabled taxation fund

•                 the Senior work off abatement

•                 Senior tax exemptions…

…Last year provided over $1.3 million in relief for our Seniors, and it will be a continuing priority of this administration, to initiate and expand such programs to every reasonable and responsible extent.

In the area of affordable housing, Revere is taking steps to create pathways to affordable homeownership so that young people, growing families, and longstanding residents are able to stay and thrive here.

•                 The Affordable Housing Trust Fund, in conjunction with private development will this year open opportunities for 20 residents to purchase a new, affordable condominium as part of a collaborative project on Salem Street.

•                 The Trust is also collaborating with local non-profit, state and federal agencies to institute programs that will provide downpayment assistance to income qualified home buyers and later this year will pilot our “Age in Place with Grace program” granting eligible seniors up to $5,000 to repair and or update homes for better accessibility energy efficiencies and or necessary repairs so Seniors can stay put.

•                 We are also working with the Revere Housing Authority to reimagine the future of public housing in Revere, exploring new public-private partnerships to help repair aging public housing, and transform inaccessible outdated residence into lively,

mixed-income, neighborhoods.

While Revere cannot solve Greater Boston's housing crisis alone, we can do our part to ensure that families who call Revere home and contribute to its success are able to stay.

At the outset tonight, I mentioned our schools, particularly the construction of a new Revere High School worthy of our outstanding faculty and dedicated students.  Let there be no understatement in our commitment to public schools.

Why?

Because the quality and success of a public school system is the single greatest measurement of a community’s status and reputation.

All of the progress, all of the programs, all of the growth and development in our city become far less meaningful if we do not complement it with a distinguished educational program delivered through our public school system.

Families make decisions about where to live based on the opportunities that their children can attain through its school system.

And the public school system provides more than just education.

It provides the social and cultural experiences that mold our young residents into responsible and productive adults.

Our schools today enlighten some 7,200 students:

•                 who will one day staff the hospitals that preserve our health and well-being;

•                 who will one day run the businesses that drive our economy

•                 who will one day build the bridges and buildings and the automobiles of our future,

•                 who will one day be the local artists to enlighten and enrich our creative pallets,

•                 who will one day explore and wrestle with the threats of climate change

and ...

•                 who will one day be the leaders of our city and our great nation!

I am proud to lead a City that has a school system that can meet the educational needs of our diverse population.  Revere’s school department is staffed by educators and administrators who have cultivated remarkable success, led by the 2023 Massachusetts School Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Dianne Kelly.

Dr. Kelly, we thank you for your leadership, your vision, and the inspiration you provide to teachers and students day in and day out.

Under your leadership, Revere is producing students who are equipped to excel in higher education, in business, and in life.

•                 Under your leadership, Revere’s Beachmont School was selected as one of only 100 schools in the country to earn recognition as a ESEA Distinguished School for its exemplary record of education.

•                 Revere High School received an Honor Roll Bronze award for ensuring Advanced Placement coursework is available to all students, no matter their background.

•                 The President of Revere High’s Class of 2023, its valedictorian, Kathy Trinh,

was among those selected from over 51,000 applicants as a Gates Scholarship winner and is now a student at MIT.

•                 And while I could recognize any one of hundreds of Revere students who represent the success and achievements of our public schools, I want to say few words about one in particular... Raihan Ahmed, who interned in the Mayor’s office this past year.

•                 Raihan is ranked in the top 2% of his class.

He has been Co-Captain of the Speech and Debate Team and led Revere High’s Public Forum Debate teams that qualified for the State Championship in Group Discussion.

He is also a member of Revere High’s Model UN and Student Senate.

•                 But it is not just within the corridors of Revere High where he excels.

He is an active member of our community.

•                 As a sophomore, he volunteered at the Senior Center, where he helped organize events and redesigned the newsletter.

•                 During his junior year, he served as a Digital Navigator at the Revere Public Library, assisting senior citizens to utilize technology for daily tasks.

•                 He has also taken his passion for photography and created a business, and he has donated revenue from his photography to support a Bangladeshi orphanage during Ramadan.

•                 And while I’d love to keep Raihan in the Mayor’s office, I think his future will develop more broadly in another stimulating setting: his next stop in Palo Alto, California, where he will be a student at Stanford University.

Raihan Ahmed is the kind of student cultivated in the Revere Public Schools.

Our students shine because they are taught by a staff of teachers who are passionate about their work and set their students’ interests as their North Star.

Day in and day out, our teachers devote their relentless energy to assure that Revere public school students obtain an education that will prepare them for the challenges they will encounter in whatever path they choose beyond school.

My friends, I know that I stand tonight where other Mayors have stood over the years.  They each had visions and hopes, and tried to forge a vibrant community.

But there has long been a sense among our people, a reticence, as if we did not deserve these great things.  We lagged behind other communities, and even in good times, we, at best, kept pace with them.

That is no longer the case.  Revere has found its stride, and now we are breaking into a sprint.

We sense greatness, a future of abundance and accord among all our people, and I am motivated to ensure that we will not settle for less.

We have the workers, the people, the industry, and the relationships that can overcome any obstacle.

We have the resources, the resolve, and the ability to elevate Revere to a city that will not settle to just keep pace, but will, instead, lead the way as one of the great communities not just of Massachusetts, but of the entire country.

Do I sound optimistic?

It’s because I am.

I believe in Revere.

And I want to share that optimism with everyone, no matter where you stand.

If you are a resident of Revere, then I want to enlist you in our mission.

That is the unity I envision, the shared optimism, and we will build unstoppable momentum.

We can make history, beginning right now, right here, tonight.

Join me, and let’s launch Revere into the future.