

Inauguration Address

I'd like to start by thanking the voters of Haverhill for re-electing me to the City Council with the highest vote total. I'm most appreciative and humbled by your confidence in me. You have my promise that I will do my best to serve you and our City well. Thank you to my fellow Councilors for voting for me to serve as your President. I look forward to working with all of you to help make Haverhill the best city it can be. Additionally, I need to thank the members of my campaign team, including eight Haverhill High AP Government students, that volunteered their time and talent. You are an amazing group and I am blessed to have you as my friends. And finally, thank you to my wife Lindsay and our children, Tommy, Owen, Liam, and Molly, for your help the campaign and for your tolerance for my time away from you when I was knocking on doors and out for other campaign activities. You mean the world to me and I can't imagine my life without you.

The past two years have been extremely challenging, largely due to the Covid pandemic. Clearly, we are not out of the woods as the number of cases has skyrocketed recently due to the Omicron variant. My family and I all tested positive just before and after Thanksgiving despite being fully vaccinated. Thankfully, the vaccine did what it was supposed to do and we all had very mild symptoms. My advice to everyone here today or listening, please get vaccinated, get your booster when you're eligible, trust the science, and God willing, we'll get through this together.

We owe a huge collective thank you to the new head of our health department Mary Connolly and her team, to our nurses and doctors, to our schools nurses led by Katie Vozeolas, our school pediatrician Dr. John Maddox, to our teachers and ESP's, our school administrators, to our police & fire departments, EMT's and to our local food pantries and their volunteers, to the grocery store workers and to everyone who has stepped up as a professional or as a volunteer to help the residents of Haverhill get through these past two years. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Despite all of these challenges, I'm very excited to be here today. I'm excited at the promise of what we can do here in Haverhill these next two years. Just as we used CARES Act money to finally address long standing problems with the HVAC systems in our schools, we have a tremendous opportunity to use the 38.3M of ARPA money to invest in our city. I look forward to working with my fellow councilors, the mayor, and our department heads to deploy these funds as effectively as possible. The federal infrastructure bill also presents an opportunity to address issues that we face. We discussed at last week's council meeting the need to work collaboratively with Congresswoman Trahan, our state delegation and Governor Baker here today to hopefully speed up the timeline of the repair of the Basiliere Bridge which is in terrible condition.

I'm hopeful that 2022 will finally be the year that Vice President Michitson's dream of a future proof, highspeed, fiber optic network to every home and business becomes a reality. This will help us end the digital divide and help us attract the businesses of the future.

The most recent census lists Haverhill's population at just under 68,000 people. Over the past few years, we as a council, at the request of the mayor, have approved a number of housing development projects to help to address the housing crisis here in Haverhill. As a financial advisor, I certainly understand the

basic economic principles of supply and demand. Increasing the supply of housing will take some pressure off of the increasing housing and rent prices. However, as I heard from numerous residents on the campaign trail and as I stated as one of my campaign promises, I can no longer support more development until we improve the infrastructure for our existing residents. Specifically, we need more teachers and counselors in our schools, we need more firefighters and police officers. According to our retiring DPW director Mike Stankovich, 40% of our city roads are in poor condition. We have a backlog of 18M in needed repairs to our roads. We owe it to our residents to provide them with better services than they have been receiving.

Mayor Fiorentini and I certainly have different visions as to where the City of Haverhill should be headed. I publicly endorsed his opponent Colin LePage in this past election. However, as I told the mayor after the election when I called him to congratulate him on his victory, I look forward to collaborating with him on the issues that we agree on to move Haverhill ahead. And where we disagree, I look forward to a healthy, respectful debate which will hopefully result in a compromise which will best serve the people of Haverhill.

Thank you.