

## “Innovation, Creativity, Confidence”

Thank you, President Marchetti, for that wonderful introduction. For many years, you and I have had a tremendously successful professional relationship and a lasting friendship. I am grateful for your leadership and the countless contributions you have made to our city.

Thank you, Pastor Weisman, for your hospitality. This a spiritual place for your congregation and, now, with your renovations complete, it is also a place for community engagement.

What a joy it is to hear the magnificent music performed by the Pittsfield High Orchestra Ensemble. Aren't they fantastic! They have filled this beautiful space with the magic of music. The ensemble is led by Alla Zernitskaya. Thank you for sharing your

gifts. Your performance illustrates the excellence found in the halls of the Pittsfield Public Schools and the foundation it provides for future achievement.

Honorable members of the City Council, School Committee, State Delegation, and fellow citizens:

I am pleased to be with all of you for the 2018 State of the City address. This evening, I will share highlights of the good work that has taken place over the course of the last year and introduce some of the exciting initiatives and projects that we have coming forward in the year ahead.

Last week, at the city's Inaugural Ceremony, we officially welcomed new and returning members to the city council and

school committee. Every day we are given a mission to work our way through critical decisions, to observe community sentiment, and on occasion, to lead our citizens despite their reservations. It is an obligation that must be respected and revered.

On the national stage, we have seen the results of divisions and how it paralyzes the vital work that needs to be accomplished on behalf of the people who have entrusted us with their

government. Here in Pittsfield, I am encouraged by our resolve and determination to put the people of our great city first. To each of my colleagues, thank you for your commitment to this noble work of ours and for staying the course even when we are confronted by differences of opinion. Collaboration must be the cornerstone of our efforts.

The year 2018 is a milestone because it marks the mid-way point in my administration. In year one, we understood that the city's future success required a solid foundation of smart investments, initiatives, and programs in order to become a modern city that will thrive beyond today. Change is the result of innovation. While we love the outcomes that innovation delivers, it is the process that precedes these desired end results that requires us to be steadfast and earnest. It is this diligence and commitment

that has infused the work of the past year, testing and validating the strength of our ideas.

**Let's begin with this - Pittsfield is Good for Business**

My commitment to this agenda was nowhere more evident than in the revitalization of the city's economic development strategy announced in the spring. This significant move forward for



attracting and retaining businesses has been made possible through the city's collaboration with the Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation and the Pittsfield Economic Development Authority. Together we are sharing our resources to create new strategies and new tactics that will position us for success. Under the guidance of the newly formed Mayor's Economic Development Council which is comprised of myself, Mick Callahan, the chair of the Pittsfield Economic Development

Authority, and Jay Anderson, the President of the Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation, the newly created position of Business Development Manager will promote and foster economic development, job growth, and capital investment by working to retain and grow existing businesses and by attracting new businesses. We expect to announce the individual selected for this position later this month.

Another key feature of this collaboration includes the creation of a Red Carpet Team made up of city and state officials whose purpose is to develop strategies and explore incentives to support business expansion or start-ups.

Over the past year, the Red Carpet Team was deployed several times, assisting successful local businesses such as Modern Mold and Tool and LTI Smart Glass with their expansion efforts.

Let's talk about LTI Smart Glass! In the fall of 2017, I submitted a proposal, and the City Council approved, a \$580,000 appropriation from the Pittsfield Economic Development Fund to be used for the expansion of LTI's existing manufacturing facility and for the creation new jobs.

LTI Smart Glass is one of Pittsfield's many outstanding businesses. Chris Kapiloff is here and I'd like to recognize his commitment to innovation and to keeping his highly successful business in our city. Like many of our businesses, LTI Smart Glass doesn't seek the spotlight so I'm going to shine a light on them. LTI is world-renowned for its specialty glass products. Following the Sandy Hook school shooting tragedy, LTI developed School Guard Glass which is installed in the new Sandy Hook elementary school. 500

schools have installed this highly specialized glass in their buildings. In addition, LTI glass will be outfitting thousands of New York City Police department vehicles. These are just two examples of LTI's amazing products.

Now, to continue innovating and developing new products they needed an expansion of their facility and more employees. The city and state stepped in to help them realize their aspirations. LTI

will soon install a new Mappi tempering oven. This oven is by far the most advanced in the world. As a matter of fact, LTI's oven will be only the fifth one ever made. Currently, there is one in Germany, one in Poland, one in Canada, and LTI's is only the second in the U.S. and the only one within a 1,000 miles. LTI is manufacturing a quality of glass that is matched in only four other locations worldwide! And with all that innovation they've also created new jobs. I am very proud to report that LTI has added 39

positions in 2017 and there are more to come over the next two years.

Right alongside many other specialized advanced manufacturing companies such as Interprint, Lenco, and Apex, LTI is expanding right here in Pittsfield. Moreover, LTI's story is just one of many that demonstrates that businesses in the City of Pittsfield aren't



simply existing, but are thriving, innovating new products, expanding into new markets, and creating jobs.

How can we give those businesses even more support? By building the Berkshire Innovation Center. Earlier this year the city council approved my request to infuse the innovation center with an additional \$1,000,000.00. This commitment has opened up more dialog with state officials and I anticipate that soon we will

have a complete financing package that will secure all the necessary funding for construction and two years of operations.

The Berkshire Innovation Center will be a state-of-the-art facility with cutting edge equipment available to our advanced manufacturers for research and development of new products. In partnership with Berkshire Community College, the innovation center will be a place of teaching and learning creating a pipeline of highly trained employees that our company's desperately need.

The innovation center, located at the William Stanley Business Park, will revolutionize how we support advanced manufacturers here in Pittsfield and the Berkshires and how we build a skilled workforce.

At the same time, we've seen the opening of several new small businesses throughout the city. Whimsical floral arrangements outfit Township Four on North Street, which joined Red Apple

Butchers. My personal favorite is the Night in Tunisia sausage.

Also, on North Street, Framework opened and provides a dedicated co-work space for professionals and entrepreneurs.

Along East Street, we welcomed Hangar Pub and Grill, which by the look of the parking lot and the posts on Facebook, Hanger has been well received by the community.

Moving over to Kellogg Street, the William Stanley Business Park, will benefit from a \$75,000 state grant toward a subsurface environmental assessment of the 40s parcel. This site is unique in the park because it has rail access. The funding will help the city and PEDDA gain a better understanding of the on-site conditions – an insight that will help to inform future development. The redevelopment of the William Stanley Business Park remains a top priority for so many of us. Now is precisely when our steadfast

and earnest dedication to seeing success must drive our persistence.

**Let's take a moment to focus on the city's strategic initiatives**

When we think about strategic change, the implementation of the city's parking management system is a good place to start. The kiosks, which have now been installed throughout the downtown for a year, have changed the way we park in downtown Pittsfield.

The system has helped to create more available parking on North Street for customers wishing to patronize downtown businesses.

This is a benefit that is much appreciated by many of our downtown merchants. Moreover, kiosk users are afforded convenience through options such as the first 30 minutes for free, nights and weekends are free, and the Passport parking app that allows you to pay for parking or extend your time without going to the kiosk. Everywhere I go people rave about the parking app. I

know it took some getting used to, and quite possibly, there may be future adjustments. We strive to remain responsive to the concerns raised by our citizens and visitors to ensure that we have a streamlined system that meets our goals and is user friendly.

The revenue that was earned through the parking kiosks is absolutely essential to the city's long-term sustainability and successfully demonstrates to the state that we have identified a



way to take care of our parking-related infrastructure. Having a parking management plan positions the City of Pittsfield for available state funding earmarked for infrastructure repairs like the Columbus Avenue Parking garage. This is the objective that matters the most.

Another initiative with tangible benefits to citizens and business is the city's electrical aggregation program formally known as the

Community Choice Power Supply Program. The program, which is now in effect, allows local government to combine the purchasing power of residents and businesses to provide them with an alternative to the existing basic service costs offered by Eversource. Considering the increases in Eversource's delivery rates, we wanted to ensure that residents had an ability to offset those increasing costs. Beginning this month, the Community Choice Power Supply program will provide city residents and

businesses with a collective savings of more than \$780,000 over the next six months.

In a similar vein of savings, the city officially launched its newest 2.91 megawatt solar power generation facility at the former landfill located off of East Street. Ameresco will operate and maintain the project at no charge to the city. In exchange, the city entered into a 20-year Power Purchase Agreement to purchase

the power that is generated by the solar array. Combining the reduced utility costs and the personal property taxes paid by Ameresco, this project is estimated to save the city up to \$140,000 annually. That's 2.6 million dollars over the duration of the contract.

**Let's talk trash!**

Like nearly 150 communities across the state, we seek to modernize the city's solid waste collection and disposal service. The proposal before the city council seeks to provide 17,000 households with a 45-gallon trash toter and a 95-gallon single stream recycling toter. The new system will be user-friendly, automated, offers greater efficiency, allows for environmental stewardship, will increase recycling and provide reduced costs in solid waste disposal. This initiative will be supported by state

grants and by the addition of a Municipal Assistance Coordinator for the western region of Massachusetts – and, by the way, guess who won a competitive process to host this position? Pittsfield did!

Our neighborhoods deserve our efforts too and while we seek new market rate housing – more on that in a moment, we also want to help shore up our city's older housing stock. Soon, I will

be announcing the details of a city sponsored Home Improvement Initiative. This initiative, in collaboration with Mass Housing, seeks to provide funding to improve the exterior of owner-occupied dwellings who qualify under relaxed eligibility guidelines. These relaxed guidelines will serve a broader range of homeowners. The program will allow for the repair or replacement of features such as windows, doors, porches, siding, roofs. Giving our residents the resources they need to enhance

the value of their homes and to improve their quality of their life is the primary objective of this initiative.

The issue of community housing, along with parks, open space, and historic preservation, are the four designated categories that will comprise a formal plan developed by the city's Community Preservation Committee. \$420,000 in Community Preservation funding will be invested in one or more of the four categories.



Creating the plan will include public input to keep the community's priorities front and center.

Over the past two years, a much deserved spotlight has been placed on Durant Park in the Westside. With the support of our corporate friend Greylock Federal Credit Union a permanent pavilion will be installed this spring for use by all who seek to enjoy the park.

Clapp Park, too, will benefit from dedicated improvements, thanks to a recently announced state grant in the amount \$400,000. Clapp Park is truly a four-season destination in Pittsfield, and this funding aligns two strong community partners, Rotary International and the Buddy Pellerin Field Committee. Both will partner with the city on Clapp Park improvements

including the construction of a splash pad, enhancements to the playground and fields, and increased accessibility.

And there's more good news for outdoor recreation in our beautiful city. 75 percent of the design is now complete for the bike path extension of the Ashuwillticook Rail Trail from the Mall Road to Crane Avenue. This is great news for many in our community who relish the outdoors and enjoy hitting the trails on

foot or on bike. Construction on the path is expected to begin this spring.

And to my happy surprise there has been a growing interest among our active seniors for the game of Pickle ball. The city is working closely with the local, active Pickle ball community and – at their request – we striped four Pickle ball courts at Reid Middle

School for their use. To keep the game alive, the city hopes to build dedicated Pickle ball courts in the future.

When it comes to enjoying the outdoors Pittsfield has something for everyone! And I say let's do even more to make our city a destination for outdoor recreation!

**Here in Pittsfield creativity and innovation is on display**

Fusing the beauty of Pittsfield's natural landscape with our city's rich literary history is the essence of The Mastheads writers in-residence project, which featured the construction of five writing studios of renowned Pittsfield authors. The studios, which were placed at Arrowhead, Springside House, Pittsfield High, and the Mass Audubon Canoe Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary, attracted hundreds of visitors throughout the summer. The city was pleased to welcome Jane Chu, Chairman of the National Endowment for

the Arts, who visited one of the studios during her tour of the city's cultural attractions. Let me tell you something to be proud of – when Chairman Chu began planning her national tour she contact each state's Cultural Council and asked them to select one city from their state for her visit. Pittsfield was chosen by the the Massachusetts Cultural Council as the only city in Massachusetts visited by Ms. Chu.

A similar convergence happened at the Berkshire Athenaeum, which featured a photo exhibit of internationally acclaimed dancer, Eiko Otake, who also performed at the library, thanks to a partnership with Jacob's Pillow.

Pittsfield's galleries, museums, performance centers, theatres – and our city's public library – all attest to the artistry and creativity that exists here. The Massachusetts Cultural Council



recognizes Pittsfield in this way, too, and approved the renewal of the city's Cultural District designation. And, Pittsfield has been chosen by the Massachusetts Cultural Council for another special initiative soon to be announced. Stay tuned for this exciting news!

The Athenaeum's partnerships have not only extended to the cultural organizations in our community, but also with our

schools. The library, in conjunction with the Samuel Harrison House and the Ashley House – historic home of Elizabeth Freeman and located in Sheffield - hosted more than 400 third-graders for a special exhibit that centered on African Americans in the Civil War, most notably the 54th Regiment. In addition to the exhibit, the students had access to historic maps and newspapers courtesy of the Commonwealth Museum.

Enriching experiences like these provide our students with a comprehensive education through Pittsfield Public Schools. And beyond the classroom, our students excel on the field. Who could forget the joyous celebration in honor of the Taconic Baseball Team winning the 2017 State Championship.

We know that along with the gains, there are still challenges.

For many young people in our community their academic journey is challenged due to food insecurity. To counter this, the statewide program, After the Bell, Breakfast in the Classroom, is currently in effect at Crosby Elementary School. Through this program, every child, regardless of need, has access to a healthy breakfast, and a chance to start to their day ready to learn.

There's proof that access makes a difference in people's lives. Pittsfield was one of four Gateway Cities selected be a part of a statewide pilot program, SOAR MA 529. This program provides matching college savings accounts to under-resourced students. The two-year initiative, which is now in place at Reid Middle School, will help many families – especially first-generation college families – make college aspirations a reality.

## **Keeping Pittsfield Safe**

Our community is a better place because of the selfless men and women who ensure our safety and that includes our fire department and police department.

As promised, the Pittsfield Fire Department successfully moved forward with proposed initiatives. The department's ranks grew with the addition of eight new hires made possible through a

federal SAFER grant. These additional firefighters have reduced the city's overtime costs by 60% - a very important savings for our constrained municipal budget. And, in the fire department we reached a proud and historical milestone when we appointed the city's first-ever female firefighter, Abigail Lemanski. Additionally, we desperately needed to invest in fire department apparatus all while being careful of our budgets. Because of the persistence and diligence of our Fire Chief the department acquired, in late

winter 2017, a 2014 ladder truck that was in mint condition at 60 percent of the cost of a new truck. We also secured new hydraulic rescue tools.

The fire department responded to more than 7,000 calls for service. With each call, our city's firefighters display bravery and courage beyond measure.



I am especially proud to congratulate Lt. Michael D'Avella and Firefighter Jarrett Robitaille for their meritorious conduct recognition at the Firefighter of the Year Awards in Worcester. They were honored for their bravery during the Tahiti Take-Out fire. Under heavy fire conditions, they crawled into the room of origin and rescued an unconscious man. With other company firefighters on the scene, Michael and Jarrett saved a life by risking their own. Lt. D'Avella and Firefighter Robitaille were two

of only five firefighters across the Commonwealth to receive the meritorious conduct award. The City of Pittsfield is honored and proud to have them among the ranks of our bravest. They are here this evening. Please join me in thanking Michael and Jarrett for their outstanding service. Gentleman – please stand and be recognized.

Turning now to the Pittsfield Police Department - ten years. That was the amount of time that the City of Pittsfield went without a sworn Chief of Police. That all changed last year when the city's Personnel Department conducted the Police Chief Assessment Center to finally select a police chief. I was extremely delighted then, and I still am, that Michael Wynn, an accomplished, highly trained, community-minded law enforcement official is now Pittsfield's sworn Chief of Police

Additionally, in the ongoing effort to grow the ranks of the police department 14 officers completed field training in 2017 and the department recently hired six additional officers who will begin their training this year. ShotSpotter, a gun-detection, acoustic surveillance technology was launched one year ago. This advanced technology is supporting our city's law enforcement

efforts. It has allowed police department resources to respond more quickly and precisely to specific locations of gunfire.

I am pleased to recognize our community partners - Berkshire Health Systems, Lee Bank, Greylock Federal Credit Union, Pittsfield Cooperative Bank, Mountain One, and now the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, all of whom financially supported this initiative.

## **Our Future Depend on State Engagement**

Collaboration with our state partners is essential to the work that we do and Pittsfield is getting a lot of attention. Last year, we were honored by visits from the following state officials: Lt. Governor Karyn Polito; Matthew Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs; Dr. Monica Bharel, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Public Health; Secretary Rosalin

Acosta, of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; Secretary Jay Ash, of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development; Robert Nelson, Massachusetts Small Business Administration District Director; and Mike Knapik, Director, Office of the Governor in Western Massachusetts.

Additionally, we welcomed Congressman Richard Neal, Senator Edward Markey and Senator Elizabeth Warren to our great city for their town hall meetings. And I must recognize and thank the Pittsfield's state delegation, Senator Hinds, Representative Farley-Bouvier, and Representative Mark, for continuing to champion and advocate for Pittsfield.



## By the Numbers

This is a lightening round of interesting facts:

- \$10,171,894 is the total amount of grants received in 2017
- 128 – number of jobs retained or created by city incentives
- 43 – the number of Advanced Placement courses
- 1,549 – the total number of employees
- 200 – the total number of road miles

## **Our Employees Make it Happen**

None of the above accomplishments or upcoming goals could be possible without the leadership of our city department heads and the hard work and dedication of city employees. I am exceedingly grateful for the commitment they display every day. Employees matter to me and I encourage them in all of their endeavors so that we can do our very best work on your behalf. I am extremely

proud that through good faith collective bargaining with our employees we have settled seven union contracts.

I also recognize the importance of supporting our employees so that they can be productive in their service to the citizens of Pittsfield. Through a Blue Cross Blue Shield grant and private donations, a Wellness Center was established last spring. Along with creation of the physical space, a wellness committee was

created and is comprised of employees from every city department. They plan wellness activities including nutrition classes, Weight Watchers, smoking cessation, and exercise boot camps. Healthy, fulfilled, productive employees are a priority for my administration. Under the leadership of Personnel Director, Michael Taylor, and Finance Director, Matthew Kerwood, our efforts have been successful. In fact, our wellness program will be

highlighted at the upcoming MIIA annual meeting this month and is also prominently featured in MIIA's 2017 Annual Report.

### **Let's look ahead**

We are challenged by serious fiscal constraints. Pittsfield is at its levy ceiling and our ability to provide services that the community expects and deserves is impacted by diminished financial resources. This year our revenue growth remains limited and we

do not foresee dramatic increases in state aid or local receipts. This is a serious matter that requires a lot of difficult decisions, persistence over time, and sheer determination. It is a condition that was inherited by my administration and I am determined to ensure that we survive and thrive beyond today's challenges. I view this circumstance as an opportunity to sharpen our thinking about the role of government and to access expertise at every level.

We've already tapped into the state's community compact program to develop a model for financial forecasting and to produce an improved, more informative budget document. And there's more work to do.

National Resource Network

In November, a team from the National Resource Network, an elite consortium, visited with city officials to learn more about our practices and to identify opportunities for efficiencies centered on municipal operations. The findings and recommendations will be included in an efficiency study to be released in February. It is my belief that combined with the professional experience of our department heads and the recommendations from the National Resource Center we will deliver our third responsible budget that



continues to invest in our shared priorities of public safety, superior public education, and the improving the quality of life throughout all of Pittsfield's neighborhoods.

### **The Pittsfield Municipal Airport will soar to greatness**

There's a lot in store for the Pittsfield Municipal Airport. Our airport is rich with opportunity to be a regional powerhouse for general aviation and for the city's fixed based operator, Lyon

Aviation – another highly successful Pittsfield business. In spring 2018, reconstruction of two runways will begin at the airport. It will enhance overall safety by eliminating potential hazards caused by deteriorating runway pavement and will correct visibility for pilots. Additionally, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Aeronautics division identified the airport for a rebuild of the Airport Administration building, more commonly known as the terminal, starting in 2020. The location and design

will be consistent with known demand. To strengthen and guide our work an Airport Master Plan will be developed. These investments coupled with Lyon Aviation's world-wide charter services will position our airport for years of success.

The airport is also a perfect landscape for environmental stewardship. Underway is the planning and development of a

solar array that will provide revenue for the airport and cost saving energy for municipal facilities.

### **Let's Meet the Challenge - Bloomberg Mayor's Challenge**

Last fall, for the Bloomberg Philanthropies 2017 Mayor's Challenge, the City of Pittsfield submitted a comprehensive proposal, centering on an initiative known as the Life Academy for Young Women, designed for at-risk young women. The

competition, which garnered the interest of more than 500 cities across the nation, is aimed at helping cities identify ideas to address critical issues through bold, innovative ideas. Thirty five cities will be selected as a Champion City with a \$100,000 prize and access to support from related experts. From the 35 Champion Cities, four cities with the best ideas will receive \$1 million for concept development. One city will be selected to receive the top prize - \$5 million.

Our concept, which is inspired by an idea proposed by community activist Shirley Edgerton and her work with young women, proposes a residential living experience for young women ages 16 to 21 who lack a continuity of support. Young woman will have access to housing and holistic services to help them build life skills, provide access to education, jobs, workforce training, and wellness programs. Like many urban cities Pittsfield is plagued by

entrenched gang, gun, and drug violence. Young women in particular are uniquely impacted by this culture of violence. With the Life Academy, we can help them survive and thrive beyond these limiting boundaries.

The addition of the Life Academy for Young Women combined with the work of the Pittsfield Community Connection and their two programs for at-risk youth are aimed at giving Pittsfield's

struggling young men and woman a shot at a fulfilling, rewarding, and productive lifestyle.

While we wait for the team at Bloomberg Philanthropies to make their decision, one thing is for certain: Pittsfield has put forth a strong idea and is a formidable candidate in this race!

**A focus on Tyler Street**



Through the Tyler Street Transformative District Initiative, a partnership between Pittsfield and MassDevelopment, there has been a targeted emphasis on the revitalization along that much traveled corridor in the Morningside neighborhood. Berkshire Health Systems and General Dynamics anchor either end of Tyler Street. Tyler Street has a history of being a lively, dynamic neighborhood that once supported a bustling GE complex. It can be that again only in a way that reflects today's and tomorrow's

community culture while honoring the unique nature of Tyler Street.

This past summer, a segment of Tyler Street was transformed by the Pittsfield Better Block project. Hundreds of community members, myself included, filled the street and enjoyed the temporary pop-up shops and a host of other activities including craft brewer and a colorful umbrella alley. Better Block has

created a foundation for planning and implementation of a streetscape improvement program. Streetscape on Tyler Street will include more lighting, landscaping, bike lanes, and improved pedestrian accommodations.

Next up is the Tyler Street Storefront Improvement Program.

Eligible businesses in the TDI district applied for funding provided

by the city and MassDevelopment, for exterior improvements. Look for new facades at Hot Harry's including new awnings over the doors, windows visible from Tyler Street for the entire building as well as a new signage for Hot Harry's and Panda Garden lit by gooseneck lighting.

Also, look for improvements at Goodwill Industries including repainted trim, repainting the western portion of the building,

washing and treating the brick, as well as replacing mortar and sills.

And over at Quillard Brothers Garage you'll see replacement of an older garage door to match the two new doors recently installed on the building and replacing the glass in the windows.

Even on Tyler Street Pittsfield is good for business!

And if Tyler Street seems a bit brighter, you're not imagining things. For a very long time improved lighting has long been a request for both the Morningside Neighborhood Initiative and the Tyler Street Business Group. So Last fall my administration kicked off the Tyler Street Pilot LED Light Project, a collaborative effort between the city, Pine Ridge Technologies, and Eversource, that allows for improved lighting, environmental stewardship, and cost

savings. Two LED streetlight fixtures were incorporated into existing banner poles on Tyler Street by Grove and Plunkett streets, and will be monitored throughout the spring.

All of this focus and attention is intended to inspire private investment and it's working. Tantamount to the advancement of a healthy and vital local economy, is that of fostering a vibrant community, and that includes the availability of market-rate

housing. Local data like that from 1Berkshire's "Berkshire Initiative for Growth" report confirms that this is precisely the kind of housing on the radar for young professionals, like those who are heavily recruited for General Dynamics. Millennials want to live in locations with hip housing, convenient access to work, and work-life balance amenities. For investors, this generation provides rich opportunity.



The most recent, and notable addition to market rate housing, is the upcoming redevelopment of the former St. Mary the Morningstar Church on Tyler Street, situated in the heart of Morningside. Saved from becoming a Dunkin Donuts, the property was just acquired by local developer David Carver and his company CT Management Group.

St. Mary's will be redeveloped into 29 units of market rate rental housing and will include campus style pathways and inviting common areas. The architectural exterior and cultural reverence for St. Mary's will be preserved for future generations.

Now, in order for David to make this critical investment he needed the city's help. So, last July we extended the Housing Development Incentive Program district to facilitate the

redevelopment of the property. In addition, I have submitted a proposal to City Council for a Tax Increment Exemption Agreement for their consideration. It is my sincere hope that the city council shares my belief in the future of Tyler Street and St. Mary's because there's proof that it works. Three previous market-rate housing projects benefitted from these incentives - the Howard and Onota buildings have been highly successful and are fully occupied. The Holy Family/Powerhouse Lofts project is

under construction. By the way, these stunning market rate housing units aren't just sought after by young professionals. The Howard and the Onota boast a wonderful mix of young professionals and active seniors. Market rate housing is truly an intergenerational asset for our city.

Speaking of seniors, the Senior Center celebrates 25 years at the refurbished Capitol theater building. Through the years, the

center has become a true community center for almost one-third of our population age 55 and over. We'll celebrate with our seniors by repairing the damaged marquis. The Senior Center is a true community asset. Earlier this year, the senior center hosted displaced families from the White Terrace fire by giving them a warm place to rest on a cold, dark night. The Red Cross arrived and set up shop inside the Senior Center so they could provide vital services to those who lost everything.

## Conclusion

Finally, I hope tonight's State of the City has lifted your confidence in your government and in our city. As we say farewell to 2017 and welcome 2018 I hope you believe:

- Believe that city government is a community partner, a business partner, a good neighbor, and a champion for all our hopes and dreams. One of us cannot succeed without the other.

- Believe that Pittsfield is the heart of the Berkshires and a loved and honored daughter of the Commonwealth.
- Believe that our destiny awaits us but only if we keep moving forward with innovation, creativity, and confidence.

Thank you and good evening.