

2024

State of the City Address



Mayor Robert Hasty

April 4, 2024

I would like to begin this afternoon by thanking the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and specifically Executive Director Jay McCracken and Members Services Coordinator Julia Pettersen for organizing everything for us. I'd also like to thank the Ottawa Ambassadors for Welcoming everyone here today and their hands-on help throughout lunch and our program.

Today, April 4th, is exactly one year from the Election. I like to remind people that prior to this, I was a local business owner and community advocate with no prior elected office experience. I would be remiss if I did not thank Mayor Aussem for the many, many hours we spent last April and May while he brought me "up to speed" on numerous projects. I also need to thank Mayor Eschbach for his insight and setting the standard of what a Mayor should hope to accomplish. Also, if Commissioners Wayne Eichelkraut, Brent Barron, Marla Pearson, and Tom Ganiere could please stand. It is not an exaggeration to say that many people don't understand or appreciate the work and dedication that goes into serving our great City. On behalf of the citizens of Ottawa, thank you.

About a week or two after our new council was installed into office, I was informed about a biweekly "CDL" Meeting that included our Corporate Council, Economic Development team, City Engineer, City Clerk, City Planner and a commissioner if available. I'm going to be honest with you and say I still don't know what "CDL" stands for. The intent of this meeting is to essentially get different departments together on one page regarding projects, ideas, problem, etc... and at this first meeting, Adam Clark, our code enforcement officer, told us we had an ongoing problem with free-range

chickens that needed to be solved. We had a lively discussion about people having chickens in Ottawa; should we limit the number of chickens, are chicken coops inspected by our building inspector, should we dictate how big of an area should be fenced in for chickens? In the end, it seemed to me like we had a consensus on what should be suggested to the council for an amendment to a current ordinance. I looked around the room and asked “okay, now what.” Christina, our Corporate Council, looked back at me and said “Well, Mayor, you tell us what you want us to do.”

I share this story for two reasons, the first is to point out just how many people it takes on one level to make one simple thing happen in city government. That’s without mentioning our guys in public works, the water department, wastewater, our police and fire, the dozen plus committees of volunteers, the people at NCAT and on and on. Nothing would get done without the hard work of too many people to name, so I want to thank each one of you as I do every morning when I wake up.

On May 16th, we passed a motion to amend Section 18-9 of the municipal code to include that chickens must be fenced in. This was the first actual law change of my administration. The second reason I shared this story is because I feel it’s important to remind you all that today, not only will we look back at this last year, but we’re going to look ahead and talk about the future of our fire department, our wastewater treatment plant, our parks, our downtown and our waterfront. All of these truly amazing things that will change not only the landscape but the direction of Ottawa forever and it all started with the need to fence in chickens.

City Finances - FY 2023 and FY 2024

- The City of Ottawa maintains reasonable, but not excessive surpluses. The City operates in adherence to its budget, effectively deploying collected revenues and grant funding.
- The City's General Corporate Fund (which is our main operating account) is operating with a balanced budget.
- Tax revenues for the current budget ending April 30, 2024, are projected to be 77.6% of total General Fund Revenues. This is consistent, although slightly lower, than in prior years.
 - Approximately 15% of tax revenues are from Property Taxes
 - Approximately 48% of tax revenues are from Sales Taxes
 - Total budgeted General Fund Revenues for FY 2024 are \$22.5 million, an increase from FY 2023 which were projected at \$19.7 million.
- The City has not issued new long-term debt during the fiscal year, however, did issue \$1.4 million of additional general obligation debt with an alternate revenue source just prior to the commencement of fiscal year 2024. The purpose was additional funding for the municipal pool. In fiscal year ending 4/30/2023 the City issued \$7.6 million in long-term debt to finance various municipal projects including a new municipal pool, new fire department tower truck, and refinanced existing debt to take advantage of lower interest rates.
- The City of Ottawa received bond ratings by Standard and Poor's of AA (Stable Outlook), and Moody's an underlying credit rating of A3. Each is categorized as indicating a "very strong" capacity to meet financial commitments.

- The City's outstanding debt is below the State statutory limit of 8.625% of the value of the taxable property within its limits and all obligations have been paid as agreed.
- In Fiscal Year 2023, the city issued 84 Residential Building Permits which collected \$23,231 in fees with a construction value of \$12,925,750.
- We issued 304 General Contractor Registrations which collected \$30,400 in fees:
- And 422 Electrical Licenses to contractors which collected \$59,015 in fees.
- The City has also successfully agreed to extending its contract with the Ottawa Police Benevolent Labor Committee for an additional 3 years and successfully negotiated new contracts with both AFSCME Local 452 and Ottawa Firefighters Local 523. All of this was done months before the contracts were set to expire, something that Commissioner Eichelkraut said has not happened in his 20+ years in office.

Economic Development

- PetSmart Distribution Center is completing a 189,000 SF addition to their existing warehouse.
- Heritage Harbor Ottawa have built 36 new units and invested \$14.2 Million dollars into their property including parking lots, paved paths, expanded docks and a pickleball court.
- Sainte Genevieve river cruises saw its first full summer season which included scenic cruises, weddings, corporate events, and live entertainment.

- The 100 Block of W Madison Street and the Creedon Parking Lot were redesigned with angled parking and ornamental landscaping. This change to our downtown led to an additional 19 parking spots and a continuation of a more inviting and “green” downtown.
- The opening of the Arukah Institute of Healing on the lower floor of the NCICG building. If you’re not familiar, Arukah provides patient-centered therapeutic, crisis and wellness services through prevention, treatment and recovery in rural communities and their impact has already been felt in ours.
- The Ottawa Center for the Arts was formed by Anne Badger and is currently negotiating for a downtown location. The Ottawa Center for the Arts plans to showcase local and national talent ranging from music to theater to art exhibits.

As part of the RISE Grant, which was awarded in 2023, last May, the City contracted Place Dynamics to conduct a Downtown Full-Time Housing and Short-Term Rental feasibility Study. The findings of the study were eye-opening but not surprising. PriceLabs, a reporting service for the short-term rental industry, reported 350 active listings within a 15-mile range of which 126 are located within the City Limits. The city was able to pass an ordinance last month that will regulate and appropriately tax this growing industry. The study also found that there was a definite need for further development for housing in our Downtown. This something I’m pleased to say is already happening:

- Renovation of DT buildings underway
 - Former Margarita’s on Court St

- Renovation of 718-722 LaSalle with TCG Properties moving their office there and a plan for STR's.
- 222 W Main – retail below and residential/STR above
- 205-207 W Main – new building
- 817 Columbus renovation with 3 Luxury apartments completed

- Restaurants
 - The French Press
 - Niku Japanese Kitchen
 - Saffron Bazaar
 - Tapatios
 - La Michoacana Ice Cream & More
 - The new Brite Spot is done with their renovations with plans to open soon.
 - Keagan's Irish Pub, we're being promised, is opening soon!

Overall, we had 35 business licenses issued with \$3400 collected in permit fees. Some of these businesses include:

- Goblin Gaming on LaSalle
- KP Salon & Barbering
- The Aesthetics Studio
- Thrive Collective
- Birth to Five Illinois
- Wisdom Tooth Doc – dentist on Starfire Drive
- Cardnet Co.

New Grants

The City of Ottawa has received over \$93 Million Dollars in grants this last year. I debated whether or not to phrase it this way because it is due to one pretty significant asterisk but “\$93 Million Dollars in grants” just feels too good coming out of my mouth to not say it. This money is comprised of:

- \$2.2 Million YMCA flood buyout grant “identified for further review.”
- The City worked with NCICG for a County-wide \$118K Covid Business Resiliency grant which had awards given to 4 Ottawa businesses.
- \$16K Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant for a South bluff Historic Survey
- \$506K OSLAD Grant for Allen Park improvements
- \$550,000 CDBG Housing Rehab Grant success story of bathroom
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, through President Biden’s bi-partisan infrastructure law, awarded \$90 million to mitigate the last radium-contaminated area in Ottawa.
- But our Representative Lauren Underwood wasn’t done there, we were also awarded a \$1 Million Dollar grant in March to be used towards a third Fire Station.

Fire Department

It is the primary mission of the Ottawa Fire Department to provide a variety of services designed to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Ottawa and surrounding area from the adverse effects of fire, sudden medical emergencies or the exposure to dangerous conditions caused by man and nature in an efficient, professional, and well-trained manner. In 2023 the Ottawa Fire Department responded to 4,182 emergency responses. Request for EMS related calls rose to a record high of 3,484 calls for service. However, those are just numbers.

Our Fire Department often works closely with our Police Department on many of these calls and on June 1st there was an emergency call regarding a dog attack on a young boy. The quick response and professionalism of our emergency services saved this boy's life. I would like to take a moment to recognize Capt. Kevin Theis, Lieutenant Jake Niewinski, Ofc. Brett Wiedeman, TC Jahp, TC Verdun, Cpl. Jobst, Ofc. Klicker, Det. Najdanovich, and Det. Nelson. Also, I'd like to share that Lieutenant Jake Niewinski and Officer Weideman will be receiving the Valor Award from the 100 Club of Illinois on April 11 in Crystal Lake. Congratulations, gentleman.

Again though, reading the numbers 4,182 and 3,484 doesn't give justice to what was also a tragic year for fire casualties with one civilian fire death. Now, most here see the headline or read the social media posts and then quickly life goes on. For first responders Captain Kevin Theis, Lt. Bryce Johnson, Firefighters Cameron Lair, Mike Williams, Mike Cuchiara, Brandon Bice, Connor Laube, Brady Mitchell, Nolan Hamilton and Joseph Hamilton, it's not so easy. I want you all to know that we also SEE YOU and we thank you, deeply for your dedication and perseverance in protecting our City.

Some of the challenges faced in 2023 for the Ottawa Fire Department were recruitment and retention and supply chain issues. The City of Ottawa has taken a strong stand on working through these challenges by providing financial support and procedural changes to combat the recruitment and retention problem. The City of Ottawa has also been aggressive and has been a leader in the area for budgeting for apparatus and equipment that may take months to years to arrive because of the supply chain crisis. In

2023 the Ottawa Fire Department has either placed on order, received, or upgraded the following equipment:

- New 100ft Pierce Tower Ladder
- Battery Powered Rescue Saws
- New scheduling software from Vector Solutions
- Upgraded in-vehicle iPad's
- New Pierce PUC Rescue Engine
- (2) new Osage medic units
- Upgraded all in-vehicle knox boxes and med vaults

The following are grants for funding received in 2023:

- REP Grant – Emergency response/training - \$22,484.00
- SAFER Grant – Hiring on (3) additional personnel - \$713,849.49.
- OSFM – Training reimbursement - \$16,969.34

Police Department

The Ottawa Police Department continues to maintain its long-standing position as a premiere agency rooted in professionalism employing progressive law enforcement philosophies that are emulated by many surrounding agencies. This is achieved with the continuation of well-established and successful programs such as: Peer Jury, Ottawa Police Department's Child Abduction Response (CART) Team, Crisis Intervention Team, and the Peer Support Program.

Peer Support is intended to address and recognize the mental health needs of department members while simultaneously fostering a culture of

understanding of those needs where members are coached and encouraged to reach and maintain a high level of mental wellness. Most recently the department launched its Community Initiative Program. Ottawa Police Department's dedication to the community and the Community Initiative Program began with a vision of bringing the members of the community closer to the police department with the assistance of an officer dedicated to the program and a K9 partner. They launched the program with an officer and a K9 named "Rookie." I cannot begin to describe the overwhelming success the program has seen this year. Through continuous training and with the help of his handler, Rookie has been a huge success in the community having become quite "famous" in his own right.

The Police Department, while maintaining the above-mentioned tools and programs, has also continued to offer education to the community. This is done with the hope of preventing some of the most vulnerable, and targeted members of the population from becoming the victims of crime. They have actively offered Identity Theft and Fraud education. Many times, officers go to long-term care facilities and present information to individuals who are often times considered high-risk for these types of crimes. They do this in an effort to reach those who often are unreachable by conventional methods such as social media posts, news bulletins and so forth.

While developing and maintaining the programs in place, the Ottawa Police Department simultaneously provided premier police protection to the citizens, tourists and employees who make up the daily population of this great community. In 2023 the Ottawa Police Department handled 18,667

squad car calls for service. Ottawa Central Dispatch handled a total of 12,594 emergency 911 calls and 53,033 administrative calls.

It is my hope that everyone who encounters any one of the 39 sworn or 18 civilian members of the Ottawa Police Department can benefit from the professionalism and dedication of these individuals. Our community can certainly take solace knowing that these dedicated men and women of both the Ottawa Police Department and Ottawa Central Dispatch are proud to serve them in their time of need.

NCAT

When discussing the needs of not only Ottawa but the people of LaSalle County, I need to share information regarding the North Central Area Transit (NCAT).

NCAT provides demand-response, door-to-door public bus transportation for the County of LaSalle, Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 6:30 pm. There are no limitations or eligibility requirements for who can use NCAT. All NCAT's vehicles are lift-equipped, making the fleet of 31 buses and vans ADA accessible.

City of Ottawa receives funding through state and federal transit programs to operate NCAT. However, that grant funding only covers about 65% of the cost of the program. NCAT must match the remaining program costs in order to receive the grant funding. NCAT can meet this match requirement through partnerships, donations, and Medicaid reimbursement. And, this year NCAT is attempting its first ever fundraising event, on April

13th at the Illinois Valley Super Bowl. (There is still time to sign up!!) If you are interested in more information on how to help NCAT meet its local match requirements, contact NCAT's Transit Director.

After a record setting FY2023 where NCAT provided 72,000 rides, a 38% increase over FY2022, they are on trend to provide even more rides this year. Many of the benefits of public transportation go unnoticed to someone who doesn't use the service but to those who do, it provides access to lifesaving medical appointments, the ability to remain at home and independent, or the opportunity to secure a job and provide for themselves and their family. And for those who do not use public transit, it reduces traffic congestion and pollution, it can help to keep taxes down, and can drive the local economy. This past year, NCAT is proud to say that they provided over 27,000 rides (33%) for employment purposes. This current fiscal year to date, 36.6% of NCAT rides are for employment purposes.

Vehicle inventory continues to be a challenge for NCAT. While they do their best to keep the vehicles running safely and efficiently, over half the fleet is past what the State considers "useful life". They have replaced 5 engines or transmissions in the last year alone and will continue to replace as needed to maintain NCAT's current service level. Fortunately, NCAT was awarded grant funding from LaSalle County ARPA program and IDOT's Rebuild IL program to purchase four (4) Ford Transit XLs. NCAT was also notified recently that they were awarded nine (9) vehicles through the IDOT's Consolidated Vehicle Program. Delivery for these vehicles is expected in late 2025. Most of these new vehicles will replace older ones in the fleet but

NCAT is planning for another small service expansion with a couple of the new Transits. Stay tuned!

NCAT has been awarded several grants that they hope to bid out this summer. One is a Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) grant in which they intend to hire a consulting firm to do an in-depth assessment of transit needs in the County, analyze NCAT's current services and identify opportunities for growth and improvement. North Central Council of Governments is administering the grant. NCAT was awarded state and federal money to renovate the back portion of their building on Chessie Lane into a maintenance garage. Considering the age and mileage of the fleet, this will help with escalating maintenance costs and limit the amount of time the vehicle is out of service for routine or preventative maintenance.

NCAT has many other programs to make scheduling and riding easier and more convenient. You can find more information about NCAT or how to ride by visiting ridencat.com or calling 833-433-6228.

Public Works

Moving on to our public works department, I want to share that when we first announced internally that we were going to start collecting the information required to put together this Address, our City Engineer, Tom Duttlinger, joked with me that he was familiar with this process because each year he gathers the information together for Streets and water and sewer and every year his information seems to find it's way onto the cutting room floor. Now it's true that I'm not going to go over all the permits and ordinance violations here (you can find them in the published form later), but I am going

to go over a number of things because context is important and a large part of what our City provides are Streets, Parks, Water and Sewer.

2023 Street Maintenance

Our 2023 Street Maintenance Program resurfaced 50 blocks and resurfaced 31 alleys. We also resurfaced the parking lot north of Home Hardware and, with a slight reconfiguration, added 5 additional parking stalls. Total Street Program \$2,550,000

Total length = blocks and alleys 32,540 feet (6.16 miles)

Total curb replacement = 5,600 feet in 24 blocks (including 2 full blocks) with 48 sidewalk ramps

East Stevenson Road, Baker Road and MBL Drive Reconstruction

The East Stevenson Road, Baker Road and MBL Drive Reconstruction of roadways and drainage improvements is currently in design phase and at \$4,500,000 is being largely paid for through a grant received in 2022.

Water Department

Projects selected in 2022 for Water Main replacements which included:

1. East Joliet Street from Scott Street to Post Street
2. Illinois Route 23 from the Dollar General to McKinley Road
3. Fern Street from Ottawa Avenue to Cactus Street

Which were awarded at a total cost of \$1,546,511 are currently wrapping up with completion expected in April 2024.

2023 selected Water Main Replacement project for 2024 include:

4. Anita Drive from Cul-De-Sac to LaSalle Street
5. Elm Lane from Bellview Avenue to RR tracks
6. West Superior Street and Washington Street from Sanger Street to Poplar Street
7. Sanger Street from West Washington Street to West Superior Street is currently being designed with an expected construction cost of \$1,060,00.

Wastewater Department

There's the Illinois River Crossing Lift Station on Illinois Ave which began construction in 2021. The work included the construction of a new sanitary lift station, manholes, force main, demolition of the existing lift station, and restoration. Bids were received and awarded at a cost of \$3,734,700.00. The project is substantially complete and is awaiting final acceptance.

There are 15 Combined Sewer Service Areas in the City of Ottawa. At this time, the city continues its work to separate our storm and sewer. I would go into further detail as to where the locations are this year but they're broken up into quadrants with names like CSSA 018B and to try and explain and break it up here would be more confusing than effective; suffice to say if you see stacks of long blue tube along a road in your neighborhood, you're one of the neighborhoods we're working on.

Parks

There are two large park projects that we've been working on in 2023 and plan to continue through 2024.

Peck Park

Last summer renovations started at Peck Park involving the resurfacing of both basketball and tennis courts, as well as the expansion of the parking lot. Additionally, the tennis court fencing received a fresh coat of paint and we upgraded the lighting.

This summer, further enhancements are planned, including the renovation of the playground area with new equipment, the addition of a splash pad and shelter, and painting of various courts, including the basketball court, two pickleball courts, and two combination tennis/pickleball courts. The total construction cost for these improvements amounts to \$1.0 million.

Allen Park

As I mentioned earlier, Allen Park received a \$506,000 IDNR OSLAD grant. This summer, the 21-acre community park is set to undergo renovations, with exciting enhancements planned. Among these upgrades is a paved quarter-mile looped walking trail, meandering along the banks of the Illinois River. This pathway will not only offer scenic views but also grant easy access to several existing shelters and new gaming areas. The gaming options include chess/checkers tables and a ping pong table in one area, while the second area features four bag toss stations.

In the upper park area, improvements will focus on the installation of a new playground and hillside play space, complete with accessible poured-in-place rubber surfacing. Additionally, a shelter and bench swing will be incorporated into this section. To maintain a cohesive visual appeal, a stone council ring seating area will be crafted to match the stone of an existing shelter. The total cost of construction is \$1.2 million.

The City's goals and projects for the upcoming year include:

Special Events:

Between May 4th's Morel Fest and the Close of the Chris Kringle Market on December 22nd, there are currently over 40 events planned in and around our Downtown. To put that in perspective, there's only 39 ½ weeks from today until the end of the year.

Some of these events include:

- the 10th anniversary running of the Starved Rock Country Marathon
- Third Friday Artisan Market, returning with 5 Fridays this year
- Kites in Flight
- Ottawa Family Pride Festival
- Ottawa Cruise Night
- June-Sept- Music in the Park on Saturdays and this year the special events committee is adding the Jordan Block Jams on Friday Nights.
- New this year is the Infinity Food Festival and Art Event

Also, this year marks the return of Friendship Days from July 24 to August 4

- Beginning with the Ottawa Area Chamber's Rock the Block Picnic
- The legendary fish rodeo
- Touch A Truck
- Gray's School of Dance performance
- Jordan Block Jams
- 40th Annual Car Show
- TSwift Dance Party
- Ottawa Craft and Vendor Sale
- Sidewalk Sales
- And much, much more

But we're not done! Then we also have

- Scarecrow Day and Fall Festival
- Smoketober Festival -which in March won the award for "Outstanding Niche Targeting" at the Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism
- And, what is most definitely the most Hallmark Movie moment you could ever experience, the Festival of Lights Parade on November 29

Projects

Green Street Elevation Project

At a cost of about \$4 Million dollars with \$3.4 Million Dollars of that being from a Grant, construction will begin later this month on the Elevation of Green Street. This much needed project will allow citizens on the East Side and the High School a safe, easy second egress during high water events where the integrity of the Fox River bridge on Main Street could be in jeopardy.

Fox River WWTP

The city has also entered into an agreement with Fehr Graham Engineers & Environmental, for the design of a 2nd Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) & Sanitary Pump Station to be located along the Fox River. Topographic information is currently being collected and preliminary design has begun. The design portion of the project is currently expected to be completed by August 2025. Construction is currently anticipated to be completed by 2030 at an estimated construction cost of \$33,000,000.00.

Third Fire Station

As mentioned earlier, the city recently received a \$1 Million Grant for a third fire station. In 2023 the City had a Site Location study done to determine the best location to improve the department's overall 4-minute "catchall" response percentage. It was determined that a third station location on Dayton Road would cover 97% of incidents within the 4-minute catchment. The City is uniquely positioned to have a positive impact on Fire/EMS service delivery with this third fire station with greatly improve response times in short and long-term growth areas while also providing enhanced coverage to

existing areas north and East of the Fox River. We are currently looking into potential available properties and hope to have one secured soon.

Jackson Street Plaza

Design has started on the redevelopment of Jackson Street. It was my hope to have this project breaking ground by now however we quickly realized that this project was something that would require a bit more design work and after all the talk and build up, the thought was to not rush it; but to do it right. When looking back over the last few years, Jackson Street has been closed for events and festivals over 80 times a year. It has very much become a highly sought-after space for event organizers and so this is a number we see growing in the coming years. Therefore, it's imperative that we design an area that not only delivers a welcoming space for our downtown events but can also still maintain it's parking spaces and street use for cars on days when not otherwise in use. It's my expectation for ground to be breaking on this project by this time next year.

Passenger Train Rail from Peoria to Chicago

Over two decades ago, ten cities situated along the old Rock Island Railway and the Interstate 80 corridor from Peru to Joliet initiated a study to explore the feasibility of reinstating commuter rail service along this route. This concept gained renewed interest in 2021, when Ottawa joined a steering committee for the Peoria Rail Passenger Feasibility Study, aiming to evaluate the feasibility of passenger rail service from Peoria to Chicago.

North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG) obtained an IDOT planning grant to assess potential station locations. These locations

include the historic Rock Island Depot on East Marquette Street, as well as a site north of the depot on East Joliet Street.

Additionally, the Peoria to Chicago connection has been selected for the railroad identification program and has received funding for determining engineering and cost requirements. This significant development marks a major step forward in advancing this endeavor, with the study anticipated to commence soon.

Riverfront Development

Finally, the last thing I have for everyone today is regarding our Riverfront. Ten years ago, in 2014, the City adopted a comprehensive plan that included in it the phrase “With a new Downtown Waterfront, Ottawa is poised to become a stronger tourism destination for the region.” In 2016 the City developed a Riverfront Development specific plan that included an open lawn amphitheater, a small transient harbor, a new market street and development that included a community space with parks and private development. From that point forward there has been some debate as to how to best move the plan forward. In August of 2022 the City received a \$3+ Million-dollar grant for the amphitheater. Knowing that you can’t build something like that in a vacuum, using the grant, we hired Ginkgo Planning and Design to start designing the park that will surround the amphitheater. We also started the feasibility study that will help identify for us the size or capacity of an Amphitheater that we could build. Last Monday, I’m excited to share, Ginkgo presented the park plan to our Planning Commission and the final project received glowing reviews. While this plan showcases our community’s new, State of the Art YMCA (opening this May), it also offers

four additional areas for private development and moves the space we currently use at the Jordan Block to a grand Riverfront overlook Plaza. It adds a new scenic riverfront roadway while maintaining most of Woodward Memorial Drive and the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. This plan allows for 7 distinct "Park Rooms" that can be developed later, with further community input and include things like ice rinks, destination playgrounds, botanical gardens and much, much more. All of this is possible while still leaving enough acreage to include an amphitheater the size of Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park.

Now, as I said in the beginning, for me, this all started with an ordinance on chickens, but I can assure you that after almost 1 year in office, the State of our City is Strong and we are only getting Stronger.

Thank you!

Jay, I'm ready for any questions.