

Mayor Noble's 2026 State of the City "Leading the Way"



Mayor Steven T. Noble
2026 State of the City

LEADING THE WAY



1.6.2026

Dear President Shaut and Kingston Common Council Members. Pursuant to the charter, “the Mayor shall prepare and present during the first month of each fiscal year of the City an annual message to the Common Council. The annual message shall describe the condition and state of the city and shall identify matters and issues the Mayor believes should be addressed by the Council in the ensuing year.” This year I will be presenting both a lengthy review of this administration’s work and delivering a statement, pointing out key areas that I believe should be addressed in the coming year.

It’s hard to believe we have already come to another State of the City address. It seems like yesterday that I was here introducing myself to you in 2016, or talking about the aftermath of the pandemic in 2021, or just last year discussing the challenges we would face in 2025.

For two and half terms, and for ten years, you have put your trust in me. I am grateful for that trust, and I have done everything in my ability to uphold the faith you put in me, and to work toward a Kingston that is safe and equitable for all.

Together, with partners like County Executive Jen Metzger, State Senator Michele Hinchey, State Comptroller Tom Dinapoil, Assemblymember Shrestha, and my friend Congressman Pat Ryan, with abundant funding and support from Governor Hochul and the State, and together with an engaged and passionate community, we have not only weathered the last decade - we have led the way in many areas.



From pushing multi-pronged housing legislation forward to creating our own ambulance program, from building a state-of-the-art regional sports facility with Dietz Stadium, to overhauling an antiquated zoning code to expanding our myriad sustainability efforts, as a small city, Kingston has been an unmistakable leader.

Over the course of 10 years, I have seen both small and drastic changes to Kingston. When I came into office in 2016, parking was a huge issue, as were the potholes. We have worked hard

to pave 184 streets in the last decade, but we are still talking about parking, albeit in very different ways.

We were able to win one of the State's first Downtown Revitalization Initiative grants, an award of \$10Million for projects to reenergize the Stockade District, which we have been steadily implementing these last 10 years.

I could not have foreseen the global pandemic or the way that the killing of George Floyd would ripple into every community and inspire change to our policing methods.

I did envision an inclusive community. I had a vision of connecting our disparate neighborhoods with bike paths and rail trails. In 10 years, the entire Broadway corridor has been transformed, the first phase of the Kingston Point Rail Trail was built (with more to come!), the Midtown Linear Park was created, and the statewide Empire State Trail now runs through the brand new Sojourner Truth State Park.

I had no idea I would have the opportunity to marry over 500 couples! Or that I would really come to hate the snow.



As I stand here ten years later, housing remains a pressing issue, as does inflation, a litigious billionaire, and rising costs on healthcare and other vital necessities. As a City, we have faced these pressures head-on, and - despite these setbacks– we have continued to make strides.

As a lifelong Kingston resident, a former Parks & Recreation employee, and your mayor for the last 10 years, it has always been important for me to stay connected and grounded to the community, but sometimes I have to make difficult decisions –based on data and facts– knowing it may not win me a vote.

In just a few days, we will begin the demo of the Pike Plan in Uptown Kingston. The structure has reached the end of its useful life and has become an eyesore in our beautiful historic Stockade District. Once the canopies are removed, the architecture will once again shine and will actually be seen by passersby. I sincerely believe that the removal will lead to a marked improvement to the economic viability of the Uptown business district.

With this teardown, we are leading the effort to right the wrongs of Urban Renewal Uptown. Though I think this is hugely important, deconstruction efforts are rare - typically our goal is to repair, rebuild, and renovate.



REBUILDING & REPAIRING

With our downtown re-development concept for Garraghan Drive, we want to continue to undo the damage of Urban Renewal. By building mixed-use housing, utilizing a long-vacant patch of land where housing was destroyed to make way for development that never happened, we are creating economic opportunity for the neighborhood.

This spring, we were proud to invite the public into the wholly renovated Dietz Stadium complex. The modernized facility is not only a draw for local runners and sports clubs, it's the home of the Kingston High School athletic program, and will be a regional draw for large-scale events.

In 2025, the Department of Public Works laid almost 12,000 tons of asphalt, covering 5 miles, to pave 24 streets.

Our Engineering Department completed a daunting Prospect Avenue sewer repair and installed new sidewalks, curbs, and street paving.



The pickleball/tennis court improvements project at Loughran Park was completed just as we got our first snowfall, but will be officially opened in the spring!

We refurbished the war memorial at Clifton and Highland Avenues. We built a dog park at Forsyth Park. In June, we officially opened Post Office Park, which is providing greenspace and respite in the heart of Midtown.

These projects moved forward despite a tightened budget and mounting financial pressures.



Since I took office in 2016, we have been awarded \$132Million in grants for 95 projects. This funding helps us implement innovative projects and forward-thinking initiatives with otherwise shoestring resources. I'm pleased to say that our Grants portfolio is currently \$76Million, which helps us continue to lead the way in efforts from improving our parks facilities and offerings (the skatepark is coming!), pushing forward sustainability efforts with solar, EVs, and flood mitigation, and tackling much-needed infrastructure projects like the Flatbush & Foxhall safe streets project.

I am proud of our Grants Management team, and I want to thank all the project managers across departments who shepherd these projects into reality.

Last year, I stood before you and predicted that, in 2025, we would be implementing a citywide wayfinding plan, installing a new stream gage on the Rondout Creek, and would be moving forward with a Parking Management Plan.

I'm pleased to announce that the stream gage was installed in July and is currently monitoring water levels on the Rondout Creek. The wayfinding signs have been fabricated, and will be installed (as soon as all this snow melts) in 40 locations. And an RFP has been issued for a consultant to provide the City with a blueprint for improving and right-sizing our public parking. Our forward-thinking form-based zoning code made us a leader in our area – and across the Country– in efforts to create more equitable and sustainable development. We want to apply the same visionary approach to our parking issues.



In 2024, I visited each of the nine wards on a Listening Tour, hearing from you directly about neighborhood concerns. We heard *a lot* about traffic safety issues. As a result, in 2025, we were able to allocate funding in the City budget for traffic calming measures, installing three new speed bumps in problematic areas, additional signage in school zones, and will soon be installing a rapid flashing beacon at Lucas Avenue and Dunneman.

In 2025, we assembled a Traffic Safety Unit within the Kingston Police Department, with two officers solely dedicated to daily traffic enforcement. We instituted an enhanced back-to-school traffic safety patrol, and with the Council, we passed legislation allowing for school zone speed cameras, which will be installed next year.

I also heard you loud and clear about the need to improve our sidewalks citywide. This year, we issued an RFP for a consultant to provide us with a Sidewalk Improvement Plan. In 2026, we will determine the best way to tackle crumbling and incomplete sidewalks across our neighborhoods and business districts to better serve our residents.

I'm listening and learning from you all. In 2026, I will again have a Listening Tour so that we can continue to have a dialogue about what matters most to you.



HOUSING

In 2025, we moved forward on some bold housing initiatives.

Working with our partners at Pattern for Progress, we finalized the Midtown Thriving plan, which sets both short-term and long-term community-driven goals for revitalizing underutilized areas of the Midtown corridor, including inventive housing solutions for keeping Midtown affordable and accessible.

We are getting creative about how and where we build housing, including issuing requests for interest for redevelopment at both the Kingston Business Park and for the N. Front Street parking lot.

Our private-public partnership with Baxter to redevelop the old King's Inn site at 615 Broadway was approved by the Planning Board and will continue to build momentum in 2026.

Phase 2 of the Barrel Factory development – the creation of 100 units is halfway to completion. We expect these units to become available in Fall 2026.

To continue our work with the Kingston City Land Bank to revitalize our neighborhoods, we initiated the City's first foreclosure actions in five years under Article 11 and completed foreclosure proceedings under Article 19-A for abandoned properties, all of which will become much-needed housing.

On Friday, we will host a public auction for ten vacant parcels of City-owned land and for the former Cordts Company Firehouse.



In 2025, Building Safety & Zoning Enforcement issued nearly 3,000 building permits, conducted over 4,000 inspections, and issued 1640 certificates of occupancy. I'm pleased to announce that in 2026, there will be a new position in the Building Safety Department for enforcement, which will not only help us hold property owners accountable for failing to meet their legal and moral obligations to protect our tenants, but will also continue bolstering compliance of all City codes.

We continue to lead the way for municipalities with the strategic ways we have implemented protections for our local tenants. In 2025, the City's Corporation Counsel established a statewide standard for rent stabilization in the New York Court of Appeals. This clear and definitive victory sets an unambiguous standard for vacancy studies and the due diligence communities must follow, which is why I chose to veto the Council's resolution in order to save rent stabilization.

DOWNTOWN

In the past decade, I have focused heavily on reinvigorating the Midtown area, but we have substantial plans for the Waterfront as well.

The City just received two grants totaling \$1Million that will benefit downtown: an early flood warning system and amenities for TR Gallo Park.

With the chaos of the new Federal administration earlier this year, we were unsure of the fate of our \$22Million RAISE grant, which includes many exciting projects that complete and create new paths and trails, and mitigate tidal flooding in the area, but I'm pleased to say that this funding is moving forward, and we expect to start engineering design in 2026.

We also have formed a Waterfront Advisory Committee to design a new Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, which was last updated in 1992. I encourage anyone who is interested in the future of the waterfront to get involved in this effort.

This summer, a public kayak dock will be installed in Rondout Creek.

We are moving forward with getting the Ponckhockie and Wilbur Neighborhoods registered Historic Districts.

We are currently working on electrical upgrades to TR Gallo Park, which will support the many events and festivals that the park hosts each year. With funding from FEMA, we also hope to restore electrical power to the Kingston Lighthouse, which was severed during Hurricane Sandy.



SUSTAINABILITY

We have long been a leader in the realm of sustainability. Kingston was the first city in New York State to receive the highest Climate Smart Community award.

In 2025, with our partners at Scenic Hudson, we acquired Rondout Uplands to preserve this unique landscape, adding 70 acres to our open space portfolio.

Recently, we announced that in 2026, we will continue with Kingston Organics Program Phase 2, voluntary curbside pick-up. With grant funding, we will purchase two all-electric garbage trucks so that the program is emissions free.

We are leaning into solar to take control of our own municipal electric costs - for the present and well into the future. We have already installed solar on the Andy Murphy Neighborhood Center and in 2025, at the Andretta pool house and Albert Brown Community Center, with more solar arrays coming online in 2026.

In Kingston, we love our trees. In the past two years, the City of Kingston has been awarded an incredible \$2.8Million in urban forestry grants. We were able to hire our own Urban Forester, who has been doing great work.

As part of the street tree program, 26 trees were planted in 2025. With funding from DEC's Community Reforestation grant program, we will re-establish healthy forests in five public parks by planting thousands of trees at Forsyth Park, Hasbrouck Park, Kingman Park, along the Kingston Greenline, and at Kingston Point Park.

Leading the Way into 2026

We have another tough budget year ahead, but that won't stop us from leading the way into a brighter future. We have big plans for 2026.

We have long needed a new Central Fire station due to the aging deterioration of the current firehouse. We purchased 18-30 E. O'Reilly Street, and have completed designs to transform the space into a new public safety facility. The former Health Alliance Hospital building will be renovated to provide bays for fire engines, a 10-bed dormitory, training rooms, a new kitchen and advanced high-tech operations, and will be ADA compliant and net-zero energy use.

The Kingston Fire Department responded to over 7,000 calls for service, and was able to respond to 99% of medical calls. KFD now has 5 ambulances, including our first brand new ambulance funded by Senator Hinchey's office. KFD added water rescue capabilities this year and acquired a new zodiac boat. I want to thank the Fire Department for all that they do, and we're looking forward to providing their team with a great new facility.



We will continue our work to replace all City street corners with ADA-compliant ramps and curbs. We will be constructing ADA sidewalks at Academy Green and creating a much-needed sidewalk on Merilina Ave for families walking to and from school at Edson Elementary.

We will complete the acquisition of 3.5 acres along Garraghan Drive and start redevelopment. In cooperation with the Kingston Local Development Corporation, we will select a development partner to help us potentially build hundreds of housing units as part of redevelopment of the Kingston Business Park.

In 2026, we will also see a newly updated www.kingston-ny.gov that will provide new tools, a more user-friendly public interface, and a simplified design, making it easier to navigate available information.

We expect to break ground on the Kingston Point Park Wetland project, which will improve parking for softball and the Kingston Point dog park, and will also create a permanent wetland.

With a \$3Million in investment from the State, we will move forward on renovations at the Albert Brown Neighborhood Center. We are planning a renaming ceremony this spring, I hope everyone will join us!



In 2026, we will initiate the planning process for reimagining the Route 9-W arterial from the bridge to Murray Street, creating a vision to reconnect two neighborhoods that were severed during Urban Renewal.

This year we will see progress at the 615 Broadway development, we will see an abandoned property on Grand Street become affordable homes thanks to our partnership with the Kingston City Land Bank, and we will soon be announcing our development partner for the City-owned property at 25 Field Court.

These are projects that plan for the future - providing children with a safe and accessible place to play and learn, protecting wildlife and promoting resiliency on our shoreline, equipping our first responders with the tools they need to serve our community, creating housing with forward-thinking ideas, and improving the quality of life for all residents.

In closing, I know that your dollar is not stretching as far as it did a year or two ago. I know that groceries are expensive and it's difficult for many to make ends meet. That is why myself, the City Comptroller, and the Common Council spend a long time on the City budget, ensuring that every cent of your taxes is well spent.

We will continue to offer our Parks & Recreation programming at low or no cost. With our afterschool program at the Albert Brown Community Center, the Indoor Playground at the Andy Murphy Neighborhood Center, summer camps, sports leagues, and even indoor pickleball, the Parks & Recreation Department makes these programs accessible to the community, and hosts dozens of free events like the Earth Fair, the Children's Day parade, and holiday movies.

We provide free access to the tennis and pickleball courts, our many parks and playgrounds, dozens of miles of trails, Kingston Point Beach, and the Dietz Stadium complex.

We continue to offer world class arts programming year-round that is free and welcoming. With the City Hall gallery, fantastic free concerts in our parks and indoors, and large-scale events like Burning of Kingston and Kingston Colonial Days, the Department of Arts & Cultural Affair is bringing quality programming and arts education to the community.

We provide reliable trash, recycling, and yard waste pick-up free of charge to residents.

We have a free street tree program to help provide long-term shade and fresh air in an increasingly warm climate.

We support 60 special events and 20 festivals throughout the year, because the people of Kingston love to celebrate in community.

We will continue to provide these services despite financial precarity.

During the Federal government shutdown, we saw what our community is made of. Donations of food, baby formula, and other necessities poured in. As more Federal programs continue to lose funding and get cancelled, it will be more important than ever to look out for our neighbors, to reach out a helping hand, and to actively engage with our community.

I know that many have lost trust in government, but I want you to know that I am here every day working for you. Listening to you. Providing the resources that you and your family rely on. Tackling the day-to-day issues and planning for future generations. Making difficult decisions that I believe will benefit all.

