

State of the City 2009

Mayor Mark Mallory
City of Cincinnati
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Duke Energy Convention Center



Good evening and welcome.

Thank you, Kay, for that wonderful introduction. Kay and the team at PNC bank have been a great partner for us here at the city of Cincinnati.

I also want to thank Rick Booth and his team at the Duke Energy Center for having us here tonight and Prestige Audio Visual for this stunning backdrop.

I want to thank the following companies for sponsoring the reception tonight. They are Duke Energy, P&G, Kroger, Cintas, Cincinnati Children's, HDR, Ameresco, TranSystems, Property Advisors and Government Strategies.

I want to thank Reverend Jeannine L. Walker for the invocation.

I want to thank City Manager Milton Dohoney and the Cincinnati City Council for their commitment to the city of Cincinnati.

I want to thank my family, and most importantly, my mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. William L. Mallory, Sr., for their continued support.

And last, but certainly not least, I want to thank the citizens of Cincinnati, for their dedication to our great city.

One of my responsibilities as Mayor is to report on the current state of the City. Tonight, I am going to share with you last year's accomplishments and map out plans for success in 2009. I will tell you, our current and future success will be based on strong local, national, and global partnerships.

You have heard from a wonderful and diverse group of citizens who have partnered with the city to create positive change. And I am confident that the foundation laid by the strong partnerships across this city have put us in a better position than most cities to weather uncertain times.

No city is immune to the struggling economy; however, here in Cincinnati, we are faring better than most. At a time when other cities are seeing businesses move out, we are seeing existing businesses expand and new businesses move in. At a time when other city governments are laying off personnel, we are avoiding major layoffs and improving efficiency. At a time when other cities are facing major reductions in city services, we continue to provide Cincinnatians with the same level of quality service. This is an indication of the strength of our city, even during turbulent times.

Last night, I had the honor of attending the President's address to the joint session of Congress. And in that address, President Obama spoke of the steps that he is taking to bring about economic recovery. And last week, I met with the President, along with a group of mayors from across the country, to get a better understanding of how the economic stimulus package will benefit the city of Cincinnati. The President clearly understands the importance of strong cities, because strong cities like Cincinnati will help fuel our economic recovery. We are going to utilize the economic stimulus to retain and create as many jobs as possible, in order to have the most lasting impact on our city.

Last year, we actually did very well in the area of job creation because of the aggressive and strategic approach by City Manager Milton Dohoney and Holly Childs, the Director of the Economic Development Department.

Their partnership attracted 2,500 new jobs to Cincinnati in 2008, including,

dunhumbyUSA which is bringing their national headquarters to Cincinnati and they have committed to adding 150 new jobs.

US Bank committed to creating 435 new jobs.

Earlier tonight, you heard from the President and CEO of Humana Insurance Company, Tim Cappell. Last year, Humana added 250 new jobs and they have added 1,000 jobs over the last few years. They also completed construction of a 123-room hotel, which is scheduled to open in April.

Medpace moved their corporate headquarters to the former NuTone site and they committed to adding 1,300 new jobs over the next five years.

I want to thank all of these companies for creating thousands of new jobs and for their commitment to the city of Cincinnati.

In addition to last year's job creation, we saw construction begin on two major building projects. The Great American Building at Queen City Square will be an amazing 41-story, \$340 million dollar office tower, which will make it the tallest building in Cincinnati. I am also excited to report that cranes and crews are working daily to complete the first phase of the Banks development that will include a hotel, housing, retail, entertainment venues, office space, and additional downtown parking.

Those projects will lead to new jobs, and we must ensure that our local workforce has access to those jobs. That is why I am working with County Commission President, David Pepper, private sector partners, and organized labor to make it easier to find a job. We will encourage businesses to post open positions through SuperJobs, our one stop employment center. This builds on the Inclusion and Workforce Development Agreement, established specifically for the Banks. The agreement is the most comprehensive policy ever developed between the city and the county to ensure inclusion.

Preparing our local workforce to take on the jobs of today and the jobs of the future is a key component of Go Cincinnati, the strategic plan developed to grow our local economy. Last year, I asked Kathy Merchant to lead the effort in making sure our workforce is educated, trained, and prepared for jobs in industries that we expect to grow over the next several years. In 2008, we went after and received a \$450,000 dollar grant that will help us in that effort.

Kathy, please stand up. Thank you for your commitment to Cincinnati.

Another crucial component of GO Cincinnati calls for the development of a Streetcar system and Streetcars will have a dramatic and lasting impact on the future of Cincinnati. It will spur economic development, creating new jobs and growing our local economy. And in its first phase, it will connect uptown and downtown, our two primary employment centers.

Now, we have done our homework and the benefits of a Streetcar system are clear. Tampa developed a Streetcar in 2002 and they have seen \$450 million dollars in new development, and another \$450 million dollars in development is underway. In Charlotte, developers have invested \$1 billion dollars since their Streetcar system was installed. And in Seattle, \$1.4 billion dollars in new real estate investment has been made along their Streetcar route. Those results are no coincidence. When a city puts rails in the ground, economic growth follows. The exact same thing will happen right here in Cincinnati. We expect to see at least \$1.4 billion dollars in economic impact in the first phase, alone. And that will give us additional resources to put to use in our neighborhoods all across the city. The benefits of the Streetcar system are too significant to allow the naysayers to derail our efforts. The facts are clear. Streetcars must be a part of Cincinnati's future and we will fight to make it happen.

While we work on big issues such as the Streetcar, we must also ensure that individuals have the opportunity to realize their dreams. That is why we established a series of educational seminars for aspiring small business owners as a part of my Shop 52 initiative. The sessions, which target minorities, women, and veterans, brought together national business experts, non-profit service providers, and lending professionals to educate citizens in entrepreneurship.

We are going to hold four more Shop 52 Seminars in 2009. Let me tell you something, we would not be able to offer these seminars without the help of a group of wonderful partners led by our title sponsor, PNC Bank. I want to give a special thank you to Kay Geiger, the President of PNC Bank and tonight's emcee. Kay, stand up. Please give Kay and all of our partners a round of applause.

Let me tell you about one of the success stories of Shop52. Kathy Goodwin-Williams was one of over 750 citizens who attended our educational seminars. Kathy worked as a consultant for a large insurance company; but she always wanted to go into business for herself.

And after attending last May's seminar, Kathy was more determined than ever to start her own business. And in July of last year, the doors of Goodwin-Williams Benefits Consulting opened for business. Kathy's company markets Medicare Supplements and Long Term Care Insurance. She is a shining example of the drive and ambition that makes us Cincinnati. Kathy is here

tonight. Please stand. Thank you for being here tonight and thank you for being a part of the positive change in Cincinnati.

Shop52 is all about small business growth and strengthening our neighborhoods, however, that begins with keeping our citizens safe.

When I took office, I called on Cincinnatians to play a more active role in protecting our city and you have responded. And I want thank citizens for remaining vigilant in helping us protect our community. I also want to take the opportunity to thank the members of our fire and police departments for their tireless efforts to keep the city safe.

Last year was a great year for those departments. Our Fire Department graduated the first group of paramedics from an in-house training class. The Cincinnati fire department is the first and only fire department in the state certified to train their own paramedics. Congratulations to our fire department.

Last year, the Cincinnati Police Department garnered national and international recognition for their efforts. The department received awards from the Hamilton County Police Association, the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. In addition, Mothers Against Drunk Driving recognized the department for their partnership with the Ohio State Patrol. That partnership has resulted in a substantial and sustained reduction in fatal and near fatal auto accidents. And that model is now being used around the State.

Let me tell you about another successful partnership, the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence, or CIRV, has brought together the University of Cincinnati, Children's Hospital, CHRC, the Police Partnering Center, and other social service organizations to decrease violence in our city. CIRV works to engage the city's most dangerous individuals in an effort to change their lives. Since it began, Cincinnati has seen a 40% decrease in group-related homicides.

Our Streetworkers are a key component of the success of CIRV because they directly engage targeted group members. Earlier tonight, you heard from Dante Ingram. I am going to work with Council to hire more Streetworkers, like Dante. CIRV is working and we need to expand our capacity to impact even more lives.

Last year, we saw the successful completion of the Collaborative Agreement. In his final report, federal monitor Saul Green referred to Cincinnati as "one of the most successful police reform efforts ever undertaken in the country." Now, those are his words. However, that level of excellence is now the operational standard for our police department.

I want the entire Cincinnati Police Command Staff to stand. Thank you for your leadership and congratulations to the department for all of your accomplishments.

In my 2006 State of the City Address, I said that Cincinnati needed a program that focuses city services on individual neighborhoods. When City Manager Milton Dohoney arrived in Cincinnati, he had the same idea. So, he went right to work in developing the city's

Neighborhood Enhancement Program. That program focuses city services to reduce blight in targeted areas.

The Neighborhood Enhancement Program and its partners have reduced blight in six Cincinnati neighborhoods. Last year, we added two new components to this year's round of improvements. US Bank is providing additional financial resources and Keep Cincinnati Beautiful is organizing additional volunteers. The partnership of these organizations has improved the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Earlier tonight, you heard from Kristy Bryant about the change in Avondale since the community participated in the NEP program. And, because of the positive impact that the program has had, tomorrow night, we are receiving a statewide award from the Ohio City/County Management Association.

One of the biggest challenges that our neighborhoods face is the issue of foreclosure. Our nation is in the toughest housing crisis in decades. And in our community, Avondale, Price Hill, and Westwood have been hit the hardest. We have several approaches to help our neighborhoods deal with foreclosure. Last year, we received \$8.3 million dollars in federal funding and, we are putting it to use for redevelopment and, in some cases, demolition of foreclosed houses. Our efforts will focus on stabilizing neighborhoods and improving home values. We have the potential to receive even more foreclosure relief from President Obama's economic stimulus package. And, I am going to continue to work to get as much of that funding as possible, in order to help as many Cincinnatians as possible.

Money alone will not fix our foreclosure problem. Like many other issues I have discussed tonight, strong partnerships are the key to making positive change. And, I want to applaud groups like Price Hill Will for their work within the community. They have made significant improvements in their community by redeveloping and selling formerly blighted homes.

I want to recognize Social Compact, another one of Cincinnati's great partners. They have worked with us on key initiatives like the Census and Shop 52. I am excited to announce that this year, Social Compact has committed to pulling together a national group of experts, armed with a new tool that allows us to better understand, eradicate, and in some cases, prevent foreclosures. That information will help us better target our resources in dealing with the city's foreclosure problem. John Talmage who is the President and CEO of Social Compact is here tonight. John, please stand up. Thank you for your partnership and the work that you have done to help change Cincinnati.

Without proper banking services, area citizens are more likely to become victims of predatory lending and credit scams. In fact, almost 42,000 citizens of the greater Cincinnati region do not have adequate access to traditional banking. In the coming weeks, I will partner with Mayor Denny Bowman of Covington, Mayor Jerry Peluso of Newport, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland to convene a meeting with the areas Bank CEOs. In that meeting, we will discuss ways to make traditional financial services available to all citizens.

Shortly after I took office, we created the Office of Environmental Quality and I worked with Council to pass the Green Cincinnati Action Plan. More than 100 citizens worked on a plan and made 80 recommendations to help make our City a greener, healthier place to live. One of the recommendations is to increase recycling, that is why we have been pushing programs at our local high schools, in our neighborhoods, and even at Bengals tailgating.

Last Earth Day, I invited all neighborhoods to compete in the Mayor's Neighborhood Recycling Challenge. And at the end of the seven-month competition, our neighborhood leaders signed up almost 5,000 new recyclers.

Rumpke reported that we distributed 7,500 new bins and we recycled 1.8 million more pounds in 2008 than we did in 2007. According to those numbers, we are well on our way to reaching our goal of increasing recycling 50% by 2011.

We are also moving forward on several new green initiatives. We are forming the Cincinnati Energy Alliance to help finance energy efficiency projects in residential homes. These projects will make homes more energy efficient. This was an idea that came out of the Young Professionals Kitchen Cabinet and they have been working with the Office of Environmental Quality, Duke Energy, and others, to get the initiative underway.

We will also utilize \$5 million in state funding to create a low interest loan program to help citizens install Green Roofs. And, on May 19th, we will host a Climate Protection Summit to educate the business community on how embracing climate protection measures makes good business sense. Three years ago, we did not have an office that worked on environmental issues. Now, our efforts to green the city are changing the quality of life across Cincinnati.

And, I want to thank Larry Falkin for his leadership as the Director of the Office of Environmental Quality.

Talk about quality, our Parks Department plays a large part in advancing our green initiatives. Last year, we set a goal of planting 2,000 trees and we ended up planting over 3,000 trees. And this year, we are going to plant 4,000 trees.

Because of our commitment, the Arbor Day Foundation gave us the Tree City USA award for the 27th consecutive year.

Last September, the Parks Department broke ground on the Cincinnati Riverfront Park that will be our new front lawn and the entrance to the Banks development. That vital asset will attract an estimated 1 million visitors each year. Our system of parks is one of the top three urban park systems in the country and that is because of the leadership of Willie Carden, our Director of Parks. Willie, thank you for your leadership.

I encourage all citizens to visit our parks; and when I say all citizens, I mean all 378,259.

This is our true and accurate population. I cannot stress enough, the importance and the benefits of an accurate count.

The process of conducting the 2010 Census will create thousands of jobs in the Cincinnati area and an accurate count has the potential to bring millions of dollars in additional federal funding to our city.

Last year, I established the Cincinnati Complete Count Committee, co-chaired by Charles Graves, our Director of Planning and Donna Jones-Baker, President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati. This committee is a partnership that brings together our entire community to ensure that we get the most accurate count in the 2010 Census. They are working closely with our Regional Census Coordinator, Bernadette Watson, to put into place a comprehensive outreach strategy that will engage every segment of our community.

In the 2000 Census, 46,000 people were not counted in Cincinnati. As a result, we have lost an estimated \$104 million dollars in federal funding over this decade. We cannot afford to let that kind of money slip through our fingers. That is why getting the count right is important for 2010.

We are a growing city and our numbers must reflect our growth. We have a great city and we must make it our priority to promote it here at home, across the nation, and around the world. Wherever I go, I take the opportunity to spread the word, far and wide, about our great city.

Dan Lincoln and the team at the Convention and Visitors Bureau are also doing a great job promoting our city. Together, we have been very successful in convincing groups to bring their meetings and conventions to Cincinnati. In fact, last year, we hosted 139 meetings and conventions, which had an economic impact of \$44 million dollars in visitor spending. Cincinnati has not seen that level of success in over a decade.

Two conventions really highlight our success in 2008. One was the Baptist Convention and the other was the 99th Annual NAACP Convention. Those two conventions brought more than 20,000 visitors and \$9 million dollars to the city. Just as important as those numbers is the opportunity to show the rest of the nation exactly how far we have come as a community. We have created a new standard of hospitality and I want to thank Cincinnatians for extending that level of service for every meeting and convention that comes to our city. I also want to thank the business community for their financial support. And I especially want to thank the Local Chapter NAACP President, Christopher Smitherman. Mr. Smitherman, please stand up. I just want to thank you for your partnership. I want to thank you for helping us make last year's convention one of the most successful conventions in the history of the NAACP. And, I look forward to collaborating with you as we continue to tackle the issues facing our city.

The word is out and there is national buzz about how well we host conventions in Cincinnati. Because of that buzz, we landed the 2010 and the 2014 DARE conventions and we are also going to host the 2011 LULAC annual meeting. LULAC is the oldest and largest Hispanic organization in the country. Clearly, Cincinnati has its convention groove back.

The future of this city is bright, and our young people will carry on the legacy that is Cincinnati. I worked with council to invest in our youth by establishing the summer youth employment program and the youth job fair to give our young people the valuable resources and experiences that will help them in their future careers.

I also worked with Council to create a co-op education program in our Human Resources Department. Under that new program, City government will benefit from some of our colleges' and universities' most energetic and creative young minds.

This year's Young Professionals Kitchen Cabinet includes 200 members, which is twice the number of participants from previous years. We heard from David Lombardi earlier and he is an example of the thriving young professional community in Cincinnati. And, we are infusing their energy into addressing issues of transportation, housing, education, the arts, and the environment. Growing cities are those that attract and retain young professionals. And, in Cincinnati, we are working hard to do just that.

As I look back over 2008, there are several moments that stick out in my mind as examples of how much our community has benefited from partnerships. Let me give you some quick examples of how partnerships have helped us change Cincinnati.

I asked Jim Miller of Bartlett Company and City Manager Dohoney to co-chair the Task Force on City Finances. That partnership reported that we could save at least \$1.5 million dollars a year by making just a few investment changes.

Our neighborhoods partnered to compete in the Soap Box Derby. And, I handed over a \$5,000 dollar check to the Pleasant Ridge community council for winning. Now that was fun. If we get 100 entries this year, we are going to double that to \$10,000 dollars.

MuralWorks is a partnership that has brought 18 amazing works of art to beautify our neighborhoods.

Our partnership with 3CDC, DCI, and downtown retailers has created new energy in downtown that you can experience any night of the week.

Our partnership with employers and service providers brought 2,500 young people to our Youth Job Fair. They were all eager to be a part of the change in Cincinnati.

And our partnerships all over town led to groundbreaking, ribbon cuttings, and dedications that illustrate the progress being made in Cincinnati.

Efforts like Agenda360 will help galvanize regional partnerships to ensure that our entire region will continue to grow.

The growing partnership between the police and the community was demonstrated on the day that the Cincinnati Police Department received a standing ovation at the NAACP Convention. *Pause.* We certainly have seen a lot of change in Cincinnati.

Tonight, as we have reflected on the success of last year, it is clear that our greatest accomplishments are the result of strong partnerships. We have come a long way, but we still have challenges ahead. The way we get through them is through partnerships. Every time we

come together in partnership, we are reinforcing the basis by which this city was named. It is our heritage.

That is why tonight, I am calling on you to join us as a partner. Partner with the police department to keep our communities safe. Get involved in your community council. Take measures to be more energy efficient. Enjoy our local arts and cultural institutions. Become an entrepreneur. Mentor a child. Come downtown. Recycle. Use mass transit. And, brag about the greatness of Cincinnati everywhere you go.

You decide what it is. But, be a partner in some effort to positively change Cincinnati. I am proud of the changes we have made so far, and I have never been more proud to report that the state of Cincinnati is strong and we are well prepared to take on the challenges of the future.

Thank you for coming tonight. God bless you all and God bless the City of Cincinnati.