Hartford

New England's Rising Star℠

WINTER 2007

Eddie A. Perez, Mayor

The Mayor's UPDATE

Strong cities are vital to regional growth. That's the primary focus of a recent report by the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC). I support this notion and am proud to say that the City of Hartford is making positive strides in key areas like transportation, entrepreneurship, education and housing to help ensure a stronger economic tomorrow.

Investing in quality, reliable public transportation that connects Hartford to Springfield, Meriden, and New Haven has been high on my list of priorities for years. This would better enable residents to have access to jobs not only in Hartford but also in the region and the state.

Another important area of employment is entrepreneurship. Through mentorship programs and promoting more Hartford-based small businesses, we have created hundreds of new jobs. $40 million was awarded to Minority-Women Business Enterprises alone thanks to new school construction and renovation projects.

Of course the cornerstone of growth is education. Along with new schools and providing a more competitive school curriculum, programs such as the Hartford Youth Scholars Foundation are putting more Hartford students on the path to a four-year college degree.

Reinvesting includes increasing homeownership in Hartford. There are 2100 more housing units available and the price range is inclusive from affordable to luxury. It is important that people of all economic backgrounds have the education and access to make the transition from renting to homeownership so that we can add to the 1350 new homeowners in the City since 2002.

So, while CERC has established "benchmarks" in order for the state's economy to grow, I am pleased to say that through investing in public transportation, jobs, housing, and small businesses, Hartford has made tremendous strides in growth and opportunity. **Together, we'll make Hartford even more vibrant in 2007!**

Sincerely,

Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

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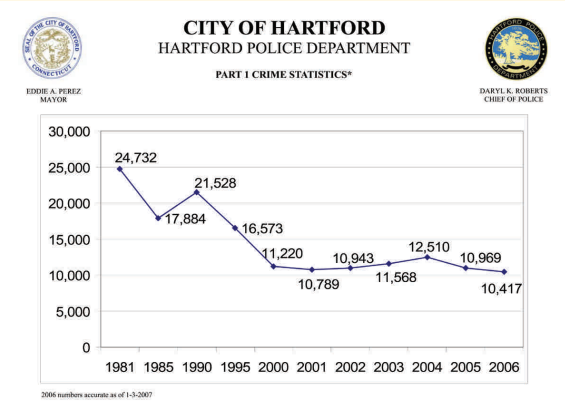
CRIME IS DOWN: *A 25-year Perspective*

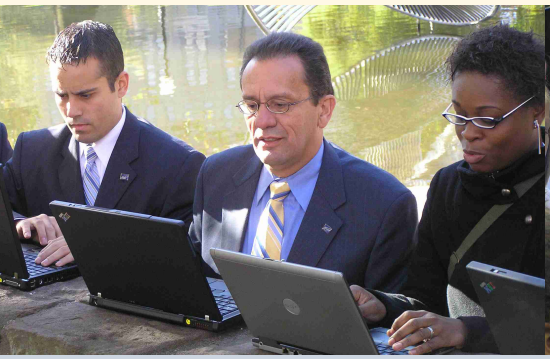
Hartford crime is going down and the Capital City has the numbers to prove it. Mayor Eddie A. Perez and Chief Daryl K. Roberts presented a year-end summary that shows overall serious crime is down almost 6-percent from 2005, more than 17-percent since 2004 and down just over 8-percent since 2002. **Furthermore, a 25-year in-depth analysis shows fewer serious crimes are being committed today than in 1981.**



This spring, 23 new officers will join the ranks of the HPD, reinforcing the Mayor's commitment to increase the number of patrols on the street to increase your safety.

While Public Safety continues to improve, Hartford, just like the rest of the nation, is challenged with the number of illegal guns on the streets and sadly in the hands of young people.

Mayor Perez says, "I am working closely with Mayors in other cities across the country to find effective ways to put an end to this serious issue. Hartford is not alone when it comes to the increased concern of gun violence – one that must be addressed immediately at all levels of government. **Here at home, I will once again be pushing for tough state legislation requiring gun owners to report lost or stolen firearms within 72 hours."**



2006: THE YEAR OF LEARNING AND CUSTOMER SERVICE IN HARTFORD

"Wireless Hartford" in the Downtown and Blue Hills neighborhoods, **School Uniforms** in grades Pre-K through 8, the **311 Call Center** for non-emergency city services, and a **nationally recognized Superintendent of Schools** are four major accomplishments Hartford residents can be proud of for 2006!

Mayor Perez says, "By making access to information and education a top priority, Hartford residents can look forward to a brighter and more vibrant future in all of our neighborhoods!"

For more information on "Wireless Hartford" please call 311 or 757-wifi (757-9434).

IN THE WORKS FOR 2007:
Woodland Street to also share the name of musical great *Jackie McLean*

Also: Mayor Perez proposes *Willie Pep* Park at Front Street Development

Hartford Builds Up AND THAT MEANS JOBS!

Hartford is known as the "Insurance City" and to ensure that high-paying insurance jobs continue to flourish, Aetna is bringing more than 3400 jobs here by 2010.

Mayor Perez says, "This is more than a vote of confidence, this is an investment in Hartford's future. New construction can be seen in every neighborhood, including Asylum Hill – home to Aetna's new 1200 space parking garage that will accommodate the company's growing workforce."

The City of Hartford's Office of Development Services has been working closely with a number of insurance and financial services companies to create more jobs in the City. The strategy is to prepare economic incentive packages to continue Hartford's unprecedented renaissance.

Mayor Perez and Aetna Chairman and CEO Ron Williams break ground for Hartford's future workforce!

MINORITY-WOMEN BUSINESS ENTERPRISES THRIVE

Minority-Women Business Enterprises are making major contributions to school construction in Hartford. High wages are being earned and valuable trade skills are being put to tremendous use. This is an investment in education, jobs, and diversity for our residents.

At the new Sport and Medical Sciences Academy, more than $8 million was set aside and bid by Minority-Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) firms, which represent over 18% of the total construction cost. The construction manager will execute approximately 23 MWBE contracts.

This success adds to the incredible momentum the school building program has experienced under the leadership of the Hartford School Building Committee, headed by Mayor Eddie Perez. The first phase of the program that utilized a MWBE set aside consisted of five schools that are now complete. More than $40 million was awarded to MWBE firms on those projects.

Mayor Perez says, "That has meant almost 319,000 working hours so far for city residents and that translates to almost $8 million in new wages for them. **This investment lays a strong foundation for our businesses and educational system."**

School construction means jobs!

New homes are being built on Risley Street in Hartford's Northeast neighborhood.

Property Values Double:
Taxes Will Not

Hartford's star is on the rise and one-way to see it is by looking at the increase in property values and the increased vibrancy in our great city! The median price of a single-family home in the Capital City increased from $78,100 in October of 1999 to $169,300 in October of 2006. That's 105%! Revaluation notices have already been sent out to property owners reflecting the new market value.

Mayor Eddie Perez wants to make it clear that just because home values have doubled, property taxes will not. Mayor Perez says, "It is important to remember that a tax relief bill was passed this past Legislative Session that will prevent homeowners from feeling the full effect of revaluation right away."

But more action needs to be taken. Mayor Perez says, "Now that State Lawmakers are back in session, I will work diligently with them to fight for a permanent solution for Hartford's residents. We need to take a bold step forward. We need to adopt a property tax reform plan that provides property tax relief for all Hartford families who pay one of the highest shares of income in property taxes in the nation. We need to encourage the growth of homeownership in Connecticut towns where 50% or fewer of the residents own their own homes."

The growth in the value of our properties is a direct result of all the interest and investment that is happening in Hartford. Mayor Perez says, "This is a positive trend for property owners. My goal is to make sure that Hartford's working families – some of the poorest in the state – are not weighed down with the burden of unfair taxes."

All appeals must be filed with the Assessor's Office prior to February 20, 2007. Forms are available in the Assessor's Office or on line at www.hartford.gov/assessor. For more information, please call the Assessor's Office at (860) 757-9630 or dial 311.

An in-depth discussion and analysis on the Assessment/Property Tax issue can be seen on Channel 21. You can also watch it on www.hartford.gov by clicking on "Government Cable Access" (in the blue column) then click on videos to find "Focus on...with Mayor Eddie A. Perez."

Hartford Celebrates Education and Culture!

Mayor Eddie Perez is extremely pleased that about 150 Hartford families attended the Third Annual Independent School Fair at the Artists Collective in the Upper Albany neighborhood of the City.

Mayor Perez says, "This event provides one-on-one access so that Hartford families can be informed about the educational options that are available to our sons, daughters, and grandchildren. My thanks to The Hartford Youth Scholars Foundation for organizing the most successful fair yet!"

Admissions Directors and/or representatives from 20 Connecticut Independent Schools were on hand to share information. Currently 25 schools are partnered with The Hartford Youth Scholars Foundation. For more information, you can log on to www.hysf.org.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS OR DELAYS:

Weather Hotline: (860) 695-SNOW (695-7669)

REMINDER: Call 311 for questions on snow removal, potholes, trash pick-up, parking bans and other non-emergency services!

PARRANDA TIME! *Every year, Mayor Perez takes the Hartford Parranda to Community Centers, Senior Centers, and local marketplaces. This holiday musical celebration started at City Hall before parading through the neighborhoods. The growing group of singers traveled to Frog Hollow, Sheldon-Charter Oak, and the Northeast to visit families.*