

2016 State of the County Address
Delivered by Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano
March 15, 2016

Good evening and welcome. I would like to begin by thanking Presiding Officer Norma Gonsalves, Minority Leader Kevan Abrahams and all of our County Legislators for hosting this State of the County Address. I appreciate the presence of my colleagues in government - Comptroller George Maragos, Clerk Maureen O'Connell, District Attorney Madeline Singas, and members of our learned judiciary.

Legislator Schaefer, thank you for leading us in our National Anthem and thank you to the Long Island Marine Cadets for serving as honor guard this evening. Will all our veterans please stand and be recognized?

On behalf of a grateful nation, I thank you for your service and dedication to these United States of America.

Fellow residents, tonight I report to you that the State of Nassau County's economy is growing stronger, our quality of life continues to be enhanced and our county's finances are being strengthened. Working together, our economic development team has created jobs and built a stronger Nassau. No more are we fighting the exodus of jobs, but rather, we are effectively competing and in fact attracting employers back to Nassau.

Our unemployment rate is the lowest in New York State, at 4.2% and over 25,000 jobs have been added to our County. Most importantly, new employers are returning and investing in Nassau, creating jobs, and local companies are in many cases expanding operations.

Our economy has and continues to become more diverse, no longer depending on a single industry. The Property Tax Cap is working. More money is staying in the wallets of residents than entering government coffers. New housing opportunities are becoming readily available near our transit centers, providing millennials with options to stay on Long Island. Transformation of the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum and surrounding property is underway. We have much to be proud of, and much more to accomplish.

Tonight I deliver this State of the County Address from the Museum of American Armor, located on the grounds of Old Bethpage Village Restoration. A public-private partnership with philanthropist Lawrence Kadish helped launch this Museum. I would also like to acknowledge the charitable support of Stop & Shop Supermarkets, Polimeni International, Bethpage Federal Credit Union, PSEG and SUEZ - all of them have ensured that this museum can fulfill its mission. And it plays a crucial role - paying honor and respect to American G.I.'s while serving as a permanent living classroom for a new generation of Americans who are learning to appreciate the battlefield sacrifices made on their behalf. Those sacrifices have taken place since the birth of our nation, and continue to occur today.

While we assemble here tonight, our troops remain overseas combatting ISIS and other radical extremists. Here in the Homeland, we have remained ever vigilant while witnessing acts of

terror in places where democracy and diversity are celebrated - literally from California to Paris. The threat of terrorism here in the United States is real! It is something the Nassau County Police Department takes very seriously and every citizen can assist in prevention.

As some of you may recall, whether you lived through it or learned in history class. In 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt asked the American public to keep a watchful eye for possible espionage and sabotage through a program known as Civil Defense. That may now seem like distant history and international terrorism appears to be well off-shore but, as recent developments in San Bernardino remind us, those shadows are real, immediate and dangerous.

Every American can help in protecting our homeland in 2016. With approximately 850 million active social media users per month, you can help report suspicious activity by taking a screen shot of social media threats, terror allegiances, recruitment efforts or any other suspicious behaviors and report this activity via Text-A-Tip by downloading the Nassau Crime Stoppers application available in the app store for your smartphone and tablet devices. Rest assured; federal, state and local law enforcement agencies are vigilantly working 24/7 to keep our County and nation safe.

While at the present time, there is no known threat to Nassau County, we remain concerned due to our large population and proximity to New York City. To put it simply, we are a high value target. The Nassau County Police Department, along with partners in law enforcement, is monitoring potential threats to public safety. We have conducted Anti-Terror Police Training Exercises and our Police Department has purchased high-powered rifles which are ready for use in response to any active shooter or terror situation.

I am truly proud of the dedicated men and women of the Nassau County Police Department for their commitment to protecting us here at home. Since entering office in 2010, the Legislature and I have worked in a bipartisan manner to invest significant resources in the Police Department to keep our neighborhoods safe. In fact, crime is down by 25% since 2010 and shootings are down by 24%. This success is directly attributable to a dedicated and well-trained police force.....intelligence-led policing models and advancements in technology, such as computers in patrol vehicles; license plate readers; and our Shot Spotter system which notifies police officers in six seconds of gunshots fired and pinpoints the location of the incident so that officers can arrive quickly on the scene to investigate the crime, aid victims and search for evidence. This past year, Legislator Denise Ford and I assisted the City of Long Beach in tackling gun crimes thereby funding a Shot Spotter system.

Together with Minority Leader Kevan Abrahams and Legislator Laura Curran, we assisted Freeport Mayor Kennedy and the Village in launching a License Plate Reader program that has led to impounding hundreds of vehicles and dozens of arrests, including a suspected murderer and a home burglar. Countywide success in reducing crime is also due to community programs, such as our Gun Buy-Back Program coordinated by the police and District Attorney Singas. This partnership has resulted in more than 4,000 guns being removed from our streets and destroyed.

Tonight, we are joined by some of Nassau's finest. This includes three Nassau County Police Officers, two of which were father and son, who worked in tandem with five dedicated Communication Operators to save the life of a Franklin Square man that had fallen into 37 degree water. Police Officers James V. Sarnataro, James R Sarnataro and Police Officer Justin Wocel, as well as Police Communication Operators and Supervisors Nancy Stanley, Carol Nadolny, Loretta Pierson, Rosanna Lauro, and Christopher Brandimarte, please stand and be recognized for your lifesaving efforts.

Tonight we also recognize Nassau County Police Officer Jeffrey Shaikh and his partner, K-9 Jake, who apprehended a suspect wanted for committing a rash of robberies -- including killing a gas station attendant. Jake and Officer Shaikh have been very busy over the past year - making 15 apprehensions - and tonight we thank them for their exemplary work.

Also joining us tonight are five police officers from the 5th Precinct who worked together to assist residents out of a West Hempstead building fire. These brave officers helped rescue citizens from higher floors with a ladder, and even caught an 8 year old as he jumped out a window. Police Officers James Schurlein, Luis Ascenso, Jason Dennington, Evan Marro and Peter Duvenhorst, please stand and be recognized.

Tonight we are also joined by three Police Medics, five Police Officers and two civilians that saved the life of a Seaford basketball referee who went in to cardiac arrest while officiating a game. Police Medic Supervisor Scott Dipino, Police Medics Robert Freeman and Steven Doucette, Police Officers John Ripp, Joseph Clougher, Patrick Rail, David Tate and Michael Valela, as well as residents Karen Winter and Sean Killian, please stand and be recognized for your lifesaving efforts.

I'm certain you are also familiar with a failed robbery that took place at Roosevelt Field Mall. 911 lit up with calls of shots fired at the mall, resulting in one worker being wounded and sending hundreds of shoppers running for safety. The perpetrator was immediately taken down by two brave citizens - one off duty NYPD Officer and the other a retired detective. Both ran toward danger in an effort to save lives. Ken Krug, a mall security guard who retired from the NYPD in 2003 after 20 years on the job, grabbed the gun and took down the thug. A mall security officer joined in the struggle, as well as Nassau County Police Officer John Carney who was off-duty at the time and off-duty NYPD Inspector Kenneth Lehr who ran to the scene and slapped cuffs on the subject. I ask that retired-Police Officer Ken Krug, Mall Security Officer Marcello Espinosa, Police Officer John Carney and Inspector Kenneth Lehr, please stand and be recognized for their dedication, bravery and heroism.

While we have recognized many of Nassau's finest, we must never forget Nassau's bravest - the men and women of the volunteer fire service who put their families on hold and lives' on the line to help fellow residents and protect their property. To help our volunteers, we launched two life-saving programs. The Yellow Dot Program assists in lifesaving measures involving victims of automobile accidents and the Vial of Life Program similarly assists individuals during emergencies at home. It is my hope that these programs help save lives, along with the proper training our firefighters receive from VEEB and the new burn buildings at the Fire Service Training Academy. To thank our volunteers and assist with recruitment efforts, we have and

continue to provide free community college tuition to hundreds of firefighters who answer the call of duty to protect their fellow citizens. Great acts of heroism are performed by our fire service, which rescued a young woman crushed by a large tree that crashed through the roof of her Great Neck home trapping her in her bed. Joining us tonight are Chief James Neubert and the Great Neck Alert Fire Company as well as members of the Technical Rescue Teams, including Ex-Rockville Centre Chief John Busching, Manhasset Chief Michael Farrone and Team Leader Alex November, Port Washington Chief Brian Waterson, Bethpage Chief Frank DeBobes and Assistant Chief John Castles, and North Bellmore Chief Michael Rutt. Let us thank them for their service.

Friends, brave first responders - both active and retired - take on the battles required to preserve our quality of life. The same is true with our War on Drugs. With the District Attorney, Police Department, Department of Human Services and community partners, we are combatting the growing heroin and prescription drug epidemic that plagues our nation and took the lives of nearly 200 residents last year. We are battling heroin and opioid abuse through a comprehensive strategy: awareness, education, enforcement and treatment.

With respect to awareness, our police department visits students countywide and continues to alert the public through our Heroin Prevention Task Force. Recently, my wife Linda - a constant advocate for families impacted by heroin - helped bring together 500 residents and professionals, which included 18 school districts and two universities, at Nassau's first-ever Heroin Educational Summit.

To educate residents on how to save the life of a loved one, Legislators Ellen Birnbaum, Dennis Dunne, Denise Ford, Norma Gonsalves, James Kennedy, Howard Kopel, Don MacKenzie, Vincent Muscarella, Richard Nicoletto, Steve Rhoads, Laura Schaefer, Rose Walker, Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, as well as State Senators Kemp Hannon, Jack Martins, Michael Venditto and Assemblyman Brian Curran, have joined me in hosting Overdose Prevention and Drug Abuse Awareness Seminars. In fact, Plainedge School District also hosted training for all of its employees. Together, we have trained 6,200 citizens - as well as school nurses and administrators - to administer the overdose reversal agent known as Narcan. Our training sessions alone have saved the lives of 25 residents. I ask that everyone who has been trained to administer Narcan, please stand up and be recognized for your dedication to saving lives.

Together, we are overcoming the stigma of drug abuse and helping families acknowledge that...the only shame in addiction...is not seeking help. With respect to enforcement, Nassau and Suffolk counties joined forces in February to combine our resources and track down the sources of fatal heroin overdoses. We are aggressively hunting down drug dealers to remove them from our streets.

As for treatment, we launched a program called, "A Shot at Life," which provides counseling with monthly injections of Vivitrol, which caps the Opiate receptors in the brain, cutting the cravings and blocking the euphoric effects of drugs. Fr. Ralph Sommer of St. Bernard's Church in Levittown formed the first Vivitrol Support Group and we thank him for his leadership. Together, programs such as these are saving the lives of sons, daughters, husbands and wives. We are truly helping combat the heroin crisis, keeping families whole and becoming a national

model for tackling the drug crisis. That is why the States of Alaska, Arizona, Colorado and Florida have contacted Nassau County for guidance. While there is much more work to do, I thank all those who have worked hard to combat the heroin epidemic.

It is our Good Samaritan spirit that government must invoke more than ever to keep our community a great place to live. An ingredient to keep Nassau great is to curtail the size of government. There was a time when government grew too large and forgot who paid the bills. Grandparents have moved to the sunshine state. Young families have struggled financially to pay student loans and support themselves, and even made choices to have smaller families due to the cost of living in New York. The middle-class was squeezed like a lemon from every angle. The bitter taste of that lemon drove me to seek changes on your behalf.

Over the past six years, my administration has remained mindful of the economic times in which we live. While schools made up 67% of your tax bill in 2009, school taxes now on average make up 71% in 2016. Nassau had the reverse trend! County government on average made up 19% of your total tax bill in 2009. It only makes up 16% of your total tax bill in 2016 - a real decline. Let me tell you how that's possible!

While neighboring municipalities increased property taxes by double-digits since 2010, we froze County property taxes for 5 years. 2015 was the 5th straight year in which households earning \$500,000 annually did not pay a net dime more than they did in 2010. This was accomplished by participating in the Governor's Property Tax Freeze Credit Program, which rewards counties like ours that stay within the tax cap by sending dollar-for-dollar reimbursement checks to residents which returned a 2.2% residential budget increase to all homeowners earning less than \$500,000. Now in 2016, County government has again frozen its tax levy. This unprecedented record of holding property taxes down hasn't been easy, but we got it done and protected homeowners wallets. Together with Presiding Officer Gonsalves and the Legislature, we cut \$330 million in wasteful spending - the equivalent of a 25% property tax increase.

We reduced the workforce by over 1,776 positions to the lowest level since the 1950s. This saves our generation money, and future generations will pay 1,776 less pensions and health care costs at retirement. We now have 6 less departments and 100 fewer administrators. We cut energy costs, reduced the number of vehicles in our fleet and eliminated thousands of copy machines and phone lines. We launched public-private partnerships which utilized private sector non-taxpayer dollars to create public improvements and continue public programs. Public-private partnerships for our bus system, sewage treatment plant operations, and healthcare at the jail are saving tens of millions of dollars each year. These partnerships have also enhanced public facilities - such as athletic fields and ice rinks - at no cost to the taxpayer. By tightening our belt and working together with NIFA and the Legislature in a bi-partisan manner, we doubled Nassau's reserves to \$120 million and reduced the cost of government by more than any other municipality.

I would be remiss if I didn't take an opportunity tonight to welcome new NIFA Chairman Adam Barsky and thank outgoing Chairman Jon Kaiman. Together with NIFA, we have accomplished much toward strengthening our County finances by settling labor contracts and setting forth a financial plan that eliminates borrowing for tax refunds which has plagued County finances over

the last two decades through a system that produces errors and requires Nassau County to pay one dollar for every 16 cents in error. Through reforms, we have reduced this debt accumulated from \$100 million a year to \$60 million, and are on path to have zero in 2018. We have also established a pay-go litigation fund and began paying CSEA termination compensation from operating funds. This progress is reducing debt accumulated and strengthening our finances. In fact, despite increasing costs related to employee health insurance and pension costs, Nassau County spends millions less today than it did when I took office in 2010. That's right! Your County government spends millions less today than it did 6 years ago and this is in spite of a 13% rise in the Consumer Price Index.

We've cracked down on wasteful spending and ensured important public services continue to enhance Nassau's quality of life. To better protect your tax dollars, the Legislature and I improved Nassau County's procurement process. Last overhauled in 2004, it had been subject to media reports concerning a lack of transparency. At that time, the policy was overhauled to reflect additional layers of approval and increased transparency.

Following those reforms, a 2012 audit conducted by New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli found the policy process was being followed, but had also created significant delays in the final execution of contracts - some exceeding the statutory deadline by 66 days. This process became even lengthier in recent years, with NIFA adding an average of 39 days to the process. By virtue of the delays, the State Comptroller correctly pointed out vendors began work for the County, at their own risk of nonpayment, before the contract process had actually concluded.

While this lengthy process was touted as the most transparent system possible at the time, we learned over the past year that the system could be further improved. To that end, I signed two Executive Orders. The first requires registration and disclosures by lobbyists; and the second requires disclosures by contractors and consultants. These Orders were subsequently codified by the Legislature. Immediately thereafter, I formed an independent panel of experts to review Nassau County's procurement process and the District Attorney issued a report to assist us in our mutual goal of enhanced transparency. We created a new position of Procurement Compliance Director to create greater oversight. Together with the Legislature, we also adopted requirements for all contractors to disclose their political donations and sign affidavits.

Clearly, Nassau County followed the laws and policies put in place in 2004 as did the prior administration, which includes 10 levels of approvals prior to contracts being executed. That's right! 10 approvals are in place to ensure checks and balances. Before a contract is executed, approvals are required from the initiating department, then the Office of Management and Budget, Office of County Attorney, the Office of the County Attorney again, then the County Comptroller, County Legislature when applicable, County Attorney again for a third time, Office of Management and Budget again for a second time, then the County Comptroller for a second time and then NIFA if applicable. Then, and only then, can a contract be executed.

The integrity of our government remains a personal as well as a professional priority for me. We are entrusted to do the people's business and it is a solemn ethical responsibility that I welcome every day as County Executive. Under my administration there is now a procurement system that has historic levels of transparency, oversight, and checks and balances.

With respect to contracts under \$25,000, while there were never any legal or regulatory mandates to do so, my administration made certain that contracts from one penny to \$25,000 were placed on the Legislative calendar for public inspection since 2010. I, along with the Majority in the Legislature, recently submitted a bill that requires the Legislature to vote on contracts from \$1,000 to \$25,000. This will create a further record of the process because the public has a right - and we have an obligation - to full disclosure.

When concerns are raised I believe the answer is more disclosure, more sunlight and more transparency; yet additional actions must also be taken. Public campaign finance reform is once again a hotly debated topic. This is not a new subject. In fact, in 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt spoke at his State of the Union Address of a “radical measure” and I quote his words:

“The need for collecting large campaign funds would vanish if Congress provided an appropriation for proper and legitimate expenses of each great national parties.”

More than 100 years later, we are still having this debate over public financing of elections. Here in New York, laws of the State govern campaign finance regulations and presently set statutory limits as well as reporting disclosure requirements, making all contributions publicly available on the New York State Board of Elections website. Nassau County now requires a vendor certification of this information in our contract disclosure process. Still the argument resumes with respect to limiting a person’s Constitutional Right to support the candidate of choice verses the appearance of influence in the contracting process. Where the answer lies I believe is with public campaign finance reform - a subject that I am certain will be further debated.

Friends, our transparent and fiscally conservative policies have and continue to send a clear and loud message to residents and our business community. Nassau is the place to live, work and raise a family! Jobs have begun to return. Nassau County leads the State of New York with the lowest unemployment rate, at 4.2%, down from 7% in 2010 when I took office. Since November 2014, the number of employed Long Islanders has grown by more than 57,000. This success is also attributed to our aggressive economic development plan, in partnership with the Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce, which focuses on job creation by aggressively soliciting companies to establish their headquarters here; trumpet Nassau’s quality of life and increased housing opportunities as well as technology to provide forums for residents to obtain employment. At the heart of our strategy is not to just seek technology firms or bio incubators, not just manufacturers or importers - but a broad spectrum of companies and disciplines that need the best and the brightest of employees in order to succeed.

Against competition generated by a global economy we seek to attract and keep the entrepreneur who can offer a range of career opportunities that can employ all of our residents. To give you some examples of our success...Display Technologies relocated their headquarters and 61 jobs from Queens to Lake Success, with plans to create more jobs. New York Vanity - a Queens-based cabinet manufacturer - moved its entire operation and jobs to Freeport. Supreme Screw - a high-tech manufacturer from the Bronx - moved 36 jobs to Nassau with plans to create an additional 30 jobs. K&B Trading - a cap importer and distributor - moved from New Jersey to

Port Washington, creating 20 new jobs. Hain Celestial moved their International Headquarters with 250 jobs to Lake Success, rather than New Jersey after being courted by Governor Christie, and have plans to create 100 additional jobs. R-Best Produce relocated their 51 jobs and corporate headquarters from the Bronx to Port Washington, along with plans to create 12 new jobs. Jesco Lighting - a Queens-based company - was bound for LA but chose Nassau County for their operations and 40 jobs. Aqua Enerviva moved its headquarters from Greenwich, CT to Bethpage, with a dozen jobs.

My economic development team has also focused on retaining quality employers in Nassau County. We helped NY Community Bank retain nearly 500 jobs in Nassau that might have been shifted out-of-state and helped them create 80 new jobs. We assisted Publishers Clearing House in expanding their operations, retaining 800 jobs and creating 66 new jobs. This success story alone is estimated to generate \$136 million in economic benefit to the county. Working with New York State, we retained Dealertrack Technologies' Headquarters, their 367 jobs and helped advance their plans for 357 new jobs in Nassau. This deal boosts Nassau's economy to the tune of \$3 billion. Dealertrack was courted to move from Long Island by Texas, Utah, Florida, New Jersey and South Carolina. Nassau County won! Others expanding their workforce with our assistance include Nassau Candy, Designatronics, Genadyne Biotechnologies, P&L Development and WAC Lighting Co. All of them had been courted to leave the state. Again, we kept them here!

An area of enormous growth and considerable potential is our county's Film and Television industry, which has benefitted our local economy to the tune of \$530 million over the past two years. Just a few months ago, Nassau County served as home to NBC's live performance of *The Wiz*. Nassau also served as backdrops for movies, including "Sisters," "TrainWreck," "The Amazing Spiderman II," and "John Wick II." As one who was recently on the set "The Comedian" featuring Robert De Niro, I can tell you firsthand the importance of growing this industry and will continue to devote the resources necessary to sustain and expand it here in Nassau County.

Our economy is also emerging in the areas of cyber security and technology. We are a leading technology center in the region with hundreds of companies employing thousands of residents. Together with captains of industry, we are fostering a supportive environment for technology companies with Nassau County's Tech Task Team led by Peter Goldsmith, Andrew Hazen and from my team, Peter DiSilvio. Over the past year, we supported their growth, assisted in their recruitment efforts and showcased their products at Long Island Tech Day. The IDA also paved the way for New York Institute of Technology to establish a Cyber Defense Research Facility to serve the nation's need for Cyber Security professionals. Cyber security is a national concern and this research facility will allow NYIT students and faculty to work on government sanctioned projects in a secure facility. Nassau's workforce has the skilled defense industry talent and high-tech knowledge to support the cyber security industry and develop tomorrow's cyber security technology today. Our residents put a man on the moon, built our national defense assets and this history of experience will live on in our vision for the future.

Nassau has a diverse economy, and its healthcare industry is growing like never before. Last year, we assisted Winthrop University Hospital in building new lab space in Mineola. But, it

didn't stop there! We welcomed Hofstra-Northwell School of Medicine, which serves as a building block to attract healthcare related research and development to further grow Nassau's healthcare industry. It is new economies such as these that my administrations' economic policies are supporting. Just as the Federal government helped transform Nassau into a defense industry economy on the eve of World War II, we will help transform our economy into a global leader in healthcare-related research and development. Nassau's Hub, once home of the Hempstead Plains and Mitchel Air Force Base, has a rich history. In fact, in the 1920's, air racing took place at the site. Speed records were established, experimental flights began and, of course Charles Lindbergh took off heading for Paris and the world was never the same. Mitchel Field was also the air base that welcomed such mighty fighters as the P-38 Lightning and P-47 Thunderbolts that were built down the road at Republic.

The records that were set, the quest for speed, and yes, the courage to succeed will again take place at Nassau's Hub. Our vision for the property is much more than a sporting arena. Yes, construction began late last year to transform the outdated Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum into a world-class sports-entertainment destination. While past projects at the Coliseum floundered for decades, we have construction underway with \$260 million in private investment. This public-private partnership also provides financial relief to taxpayers by eliminating over \$2 million in annual expenses the County previously paid - utilities, parking lot repairs and capital expenditures. All are no longer paid for by taxpayers!

The new Coliseum will retain its history of honoring our veterans while sharing revenue with taxpayers, employing 2,700 people and providing \$10 billion in economic activity to our economy. When complete, the Coliseum will host over 250 events annually, including six NY Islanders games, Brooklyn Nets games, the Long Island Nets, boxing, and college basketball - as well as star-studded concerts and family entertainment. Later this year, construction will also begin on an entertainment district. Redevelopment is much greater than just a sports and entertainment zone.

An additional \$140 million private investment from Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center will occur at the corner of Hempstead Turnpike and Charles Lindbergh Boulevard. Memorial Sloan Kettering will not only provide world-class cancer care, but also employ 250 clinical and administrative positions with an average annual salary and benefits package totaling \$150,000. They will add synergy to our growing healthcare economy and provide other state-of-the-art care to those fighting cancer.

Most recently, Nassau County and New York State entered discussions with the Feinstein Institute to establish a Bioelectronics research and development center at the Hub. The establishment of a global-scale Center for Bioelectronic Medicine is expected to create nearly 150 new jobs, bringing the total number employed to 400; and serve as a catalyst to attract companies and researchers from across the globe in this exciting new field in medical treatments. While the defense industry built our economy of the past, the health care R&D industry is helping build a new economy. I thank Governor Cuomo, as well as Senators Jack Martins, Carl Marcellino, Kemp Hannon and Michael Venditto for recognizing this new economy and proposing a \$50 million investment in the Feinstein Institute for Medical Research at the Hub. I want to thank the LIA, and it's President Kevin Law, for their support as well.

From university labs, research facilities such as Feinstein and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, the nation's brightest scientists and the smartest venture capitalists will seek a home here. New York State has the opportunity to partner with Nassau County to further transform 51-acres of the Coliseum parking lot into an economic engine for research and development. Together, we can attract billions in private investment and create thousands of new, permanent jobs to complement existing educational institutions, financial companies, research and development and the Coliseum.

With \$450 million set aside by our State Senate delegation for economic development on Long Island, there is no better place to invest than the Hub. I have forwarded an economic development plan, along with a funding request to our State leaders. The plan requests \$225 million for Phase I infrastructure and transit improvements to transform the Hub. With this funding, we can unlock 1.4 million square feet to private investment by erecting green parking structures to replace surface parking requirements. Parking would support biotechnology space and attractive amenities, as well as 4-acres of park and green infrastructure that attracts residents and families to a destination in its' own right. Next, our plan launches a Bus Rapid Transit system to alleviate traffic and transform the way people travel, live, and work in our community because we recognize that we cannot continue to commute as we have without causing damage to our quality of life. This transportation system will connect surrounding communities, academia and intermodal centers while reducing congestion, pollution, travel time and supporting job creation all while attracting new private sector investment. Third, Green Pedestrian Connectors are needed at the Hub to connect Hofstra University, Nassau Community College, Mitchel Athletic Complex, Museum Row, RXR Plaza, Kellenberg Memorial High School and the Coliseum with direct, walkable access to the Hub. Lastly, we must enhance the Hub with Destination Green Infrastructure to create a world-class research and development destination - not through office space alone - but by creating a sense of "place" that will foster and inspire creative and collaborative thinking. These are not distant visionary concepts. They are practical and achievable goals that responsible government leaders must advocate for the purpose of creating our future economy. Nassau's Hub should, and can, provide real year-round economic activity, improve our quality of life and create a job-generating economic engine for millennials and generations to come.

In the 1920's, New York State and Robert Moses transformed Long Island from backwoods and farms to suburbia as we know it today. Nearly a century later, it is time to once again invest in the future of Long Island and transform Nassau County to meet the challenges of a new century. The infrastructure investments made nearly 100 years ago, supported Long Island's skyrocketing population, which most famously took root in Levittown - making it the first place where a developer built homes in one subdivision, providing a great opportunity for GI's returning home from World War II to raise their families. That housing was a pillar of our economic success.

Now, in 2016, housing is at a premium and our young workforce, families, veterans and seniors are struggling to find housing opportunities. To assist veterans and active duty military families, we transformed 60 dilapidated homes on the old Mitchel Air Base into veteran housing. We also helped rehabilitate five, two-bedroom townhouses in Hempstead to house homeless veterans and their families; and worked with a not-for-profit organization to build a home for a returning Iraq-

war veteran in Hicksville. With the IDA, we have incentivized the private sector to increase our housing stock for families and seniors. More than 3,500 new apartments have opened or are now under construction in Nassau, with more than 1,000 units being constructed through our incentives to convert vacant office space into apartments near transit centers. You can view our success in Great Neck, Great Neck Plaza, Farmingdale, Hempstead, Manhasset, Mineola, New Cassel, Roslyn and Westbury. I thank Legislators Rich Nicoletto and Vincent Muscarella for supporting these efforts.

Together with Legislators Siela Bynoe, Laura Curran and Steve Rhoads, we launched a land bank that will tackle zombie houses, by acquiring, rehabilitating and selling them. Whether it's the local barber, pizzeria, or business incubator such as LaunchPad Long Island, these housing initiatives are helping to grow businesses, create jobs and breathe new life in our downtown communities. To secure our future economic success, I formed The Nassau 200 - a group of millennials who will assist our pursuit of transit-oriented housing opportunities.

In transforming our communities to achieve decades of future economic prosperity, we must endeavor to clean up our environment. While corporate and government leaders never imagined the environmental impact they would leave behind over the past century, we have been left to clean significant contamination. Brownfields, plumes, and aged-infrastructure that dumps treated sewage into our local bays. With assistance from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Legislators Dennis Dunne, Laura Schaefer and Rose Walker, as well as Assemblyman Joseph Saladino, we are addressing many of these issues. In fact, less than a year ago, the DEC finalized a consent order requiring Northrop Grumman and the Navy to address elevated levels of groundwater contamination originating at its Bethpage defense site.

This year, we seek to finalize plans with the federal and state governments for the construction of an Ocean Outfall Pipe at the Bay Park Wastewater Treatment Plant. To strengthen our shoreline, protect our marine life and improve our environment for decades to come, we must build this infrastructure so that treated sewage is no longer dumped in our western bays - resulting in excessive nitrogen in our waterways. I thank Governor Cuomo for his commitment of \$150 million for the project. I also thank Senator Schumer for his steadfast support in seeking Federal dollars so that this project can get underway and I am optimistic an agreement will be reached to construct an Ocean Outfall Pipe. That much needed infrastructure will greatly complement the progress we have made at the Bay Park Wastewater Treatment Plant since Superstorm Sandy, where over \$800 million in improvements, restoration and infrastructure hardening is underway. Progress includes the reduction of odor emissions, rehabilitation of primary engine generators, restoration and elevation of the Plant's electrical distribution system, and construction of berms and walls surrounding the Plant to protect it against a tidal surge of up to 18 feet above sea level. Adjacent to the Plant, the East Park was reconstructed, is open to the public and serves as home to the East Rockaway Raiders Youth Football League and Cheerleaders. The majority of this work is possible thanks to the support of our leaders in Congress and Albany. I thank Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, Congressmen King and Israel, and Governor Cuomo for securing \$830 million for the Plant. I also thank Legislators Denise Ford and Howard Kopel for their commitment to seeing this resiliency project through to completion.

Other infrastructure improvements continue Countywide. While the largest takes place at the Coliseum, other work is underway at the former Social Services Building in Garden City which is being converted into a new Family Court. A new Crime Lab is under construction at the Public Safety Center in Westbury and a new Police Training Academy will be constructed near Nassau Community College. With the support of Legislator Steve Rhoads, police precincts are being replaced with new buildings that better serve our communities, and with the Office of Minority Affairs we have ensured 30% MWBE participation in these projects.

Millions are being invested in County roadways, park improvements, and streetscaping projects, and Minority Affairs has nearly tripled the amount of MWBE opportunities year-to-date by expanding MWBE participation to 8,000 eligible bidders. New cabanas are arriving at Nickerson Beach this season, and a Pitch and Putt was built on the beach by the hardworking members of CSEA. New athletic fields are being constructed, including a first-of-its-kind field for children with disabilities in Eisenhower Park. Also in Eisenhower, the Northwell Health Ice Center will host official NY Islander practices, youth hockey leagues and share their profits with taxpayers. Cantiague Park showcases new fields and a renovated NHL-sized ice rink that now accommodates more youth hockey teams and figure skating. Grant Park also showcases a new ice rink.

Plans are underway to install sewer systems in parts of our north shore thanks to support from Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton and Glen Cove Mayor Reggie Spinello. With the assistance of Vision Long Island, Complete Street initiatives are being used to ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety on our roadways. Significant portions of the County are being repaired from damage caused by Superstorm Sandy. The final phase of West Shore Road reconstruction is included in our Capital Plan. The Bayville Bridge will undergo additional repairs. The Police Marine Bureau administration building and fueling station adjacent to Bay Park is set to be storm-hardened. 145 South Shore traffic signals will be replaced. The community center at Wantagh Park will be demolished and rebuilt, along with a new mini golf course. A kayak launch and boardwalk will be constructed at Milburn Creek Park. We are truly building better, smarter and stronger than ever before while enhancing the quality of life throughout our communities.

Friends, our vision for a better and brighter Nassau County is quickly becoming a reality. Our steps forward toward success have been recognized locally and nationally. We have earned a Regional Leadership Award from Vision Long Island for safer roadways, greenways, new transit-oriented housing and environmental protection. We received an Environmental Equinox Award for Outstanding Commitment for the Protection and Restoration of the Western Bays from The Citizens Campaign for the Environment. We earned national recognition for Excellence in Public Health from the National Association of County and City Health Officials. Our County received a Local Government Performance and Efficiency Award from the State of New York. We also received an award from the National Council for Public-Private Partnerships and a Community Policing Award for our efforts in fighting the heroin epidemic.

The future holds many opportunities and I'm certain we will continue to earn recognition as a municipal leader. We will continue to keep Nassau one of the safest large counties in America. We will continue to protect the taxpayers' wallet by advancing efficiencies and building a

stronger local economy. We will continue to grow jobs and enhance our quality of life. We will continue to build upon the integrity of this administration, one that is committed to the simple principle that an open, honest and transparent government is the foundation upon which all democracy rests.

We have ambitious plans, many of which have already made Nassau County the best place to live, work and raise a family...and many more that will continue to enhance our quality of life. We will continue to tackle the status quo, continue to build a stronger community, and leave our County in a better state than we found it. It is not possible to do this alone. Unlike other parts of the nation where partisan differences have created governmental gridlock, we can and do respect each other's political differences with the understanding that we serve a common purpose - the people's business.

I am honored to be your County Executive. May God Bless you, Nassau County, the State of New York and these United States of America.

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