

**Mayor Segarra's Speech at Rising Star  
Breakfast: Hartford: One City, One Plan  
to Create Opportunities Together**

## **Hartford: One City, One Plan to Create Opportunities Together**

As the saying goes, Hartford was founded by a hooker. In reality, it was founded by a man of the cloth--- the Rev. Thomas Hooker. The performing arts center where we are today is a living memorial to another minister--- Horace Bushnell. Both men believed strongly in civic responsibility, collaborative thinking, and not just positive, but ground-breaking and long-standing results.

Examples of Hartford's legacy: Hooker's Fundamental Orders became the framework of the Connecticut Constitution; Bushnell Park is the first public park in America; we have bragging rights to the first public art museum; and the Hartford Courant--- this program's media sponsor--- is the oldest, continuously published newspaper in the country.

Today--- 375 years and 66 Mayors later, I stand before you--- a very diverse group of business leaders--- to say that I have restored confidence in City government; I've worn multiple hats--- and I've even worn several costumes for that matter--- to renew energy in Hartford; and I continue to work tirelessly to restore Connecticut's Capital City to its rightful place in history. This won't happen overnight. This won't happen by government acting alone. But it will happen because my administration is reaching out and laying down the groundwork for a more accountable, more ethical, and a more efficient Hartford.

As a Mayor, a lawyer, and a social worker, I have found that successful organizations are driven by their ethics. Leaders who make a difference embrace an inner journey of integrity and make an outer commitment to the common good. That is why my administration follows four key goals in order to achieve higher standards of trust:

1. Ensure each office is accountable for operating in a fiscally prudent manner and achieving results to advance the City's interest.
2. Safeguard the health, cleanliness and safety of the community in ways that reflect the wants and needs of the people who live, work, and visit Hartford.
3. Create jobs and improve the quality of education for Hartford's children and adults.
4. Pursue opportunities to accelerate and expand the economic vitality of Hartford's business community and neighborhoods.

A more accountable government is a more ethical one. That being said, my administration is against the abuse of power, corruption, embezzlement, favoritism, nepotism, discrimination, and administrative indiscretion. Because government utilizes public funding, strict ethical standards are necessary. My administration is for transparency and accessibility and already I have:

- 1) Created clear parameters for managing relationships with contractors
- 2) Established consistent and updated ethics and freedom of information act training
- 3) Placed the Chief Operating Officer directly in charge of all procurement and holding him accountable for transactions
- 4) Based all appointments and promotions on experience and merit.

Establishing these ground rules will strengthen the bonds of trust with neighborhood organizations, the business community and with higher levels of government. Partnerships are paramount.

It has worked before and will work again. More than a century ago, the great collaborator Henry Ford came to Hartford to visit Colonel Albert Pope--- the famed innovator and industrialist of Columbia Bike and Pope Park fame--- to share some big ideas. Ford later said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

I don't know about you, but that sounds like our "One City, One Plan" for conservation and development to me!

Here's our successful track record of collaboration so far:

1. Hartford is a safer city. By aggressively addressing serious crime with our Neighborhood Policing Plan and Hartford Crime Stoppers hotline, we continue to reduce crime to historic lows. Our latest reduction is almost 7-percent --- 6.5 percent of that in the six months that I've been Mayor. But we can and will do better.
2. Hartford is a more attractive city. Our "Week of the Parks" clean-up and beautification effort brought an unprecedented outpouring of support from community groups, businesses, and individuals. Educational and recreational goals were accomplished and the Green Ribbon Task Force is reviewing and recommending action to improve the quality, condition, financing and governance of our historic park system.
3. Repeat: Hartford is a more attractive city. The "Butt Ugly Building" is down and thanks to the public/private partnership with The Hartford, soon the Capitol West building will follow suit.
4. Hartford is more fun. First Night was a great success. By working with Bob Crawford of Champions Skating Center, the Connecticut Whale, and the Greater Hartford Arts Council, a wide variety of businesses stepped up to the plate and helped fund our wildly successful Bushnell Park Ice Skating Rink. 20,000 people skated for free and another 20,000 cheered them on.
5. Hartford is a better educated city. Reform/Choice policies must continue. Three straight years of improved test scores and four nationally ranked high schools speak for themselves. This is the product of parents, educators and businesses investing in our students. I also want to thank the business community for its continued investment in Achieve Hartford as a way to sustain our education reform.
6. Hartford is an Arts Leader. Thanks to our partnership with the Greater Hartford Arts Council, our Arts and Heritage Jobs Grant Program, to date, has seen an investment of more than \$2.2 million in arts and culture and better yet--- it has seen a far greater return. We've retained, expanded, and created employment opportunities for Hartford residents--- especially our youth. It proves that the Arts in Hartford are more than good for the mind, body, and soul--- they're good for our pocketbooks as well. Economic impact dollars have exceeded \$3.3 million.

Hartford's 200-plus Arts and Heritage organizations, including the Bushnell, are part of a center of commerce for a region of 1.2 million people, home to three Fortune 100 companies, and part of the job-hub for the region and state. Hartford is home to more than 100,000 jobs. We need to be home to more.

Government can foster growth and incubate an environment that is conducive to hiring by both small and large businesses. In fact, 63% of all new jobs created are done so by new businesses with less than 100 employees.

Under my leadership, the City of Hartford will spend a great deal of time identifying young, fast-growing companies that can create significant numbers of new jobs. To do that, I will lead a standing "Jobs Roundtable" of community business leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators. In the meantime, my administration is already working on an immediate and long-term strategy for economic development that focuses on new trends, opportunities and business needs. Also our COO, David Panagore, has begun the search for a dedicated Development Director who will be pro-business and a champion of Hartford and who will guide these projects through the regulation and permit process. And, we're recommitting our efforts to pursue and retain employers by establishing a dedicated Business Development Office.

I'd like to take a moment to announce one of those new businesses. In the immediate future, details will be rolled out about a full scale grocery store finally coming to Downtown Hartford. "The Market @ Hartford 21" will open this spring. Arranged through the Hartford Community Loan Fund in conjunction

with the City and Northland Investment Corporation, we have every faith and confidence that this venture will add to the vibrancy of our City and the employment of local residents.

For decades, the argument has been made to attract and develop a strong student and youth population in Hartford to enhance the dynamics of the City. Capital Community College, the UCONN School of Business and the Saint Joseph's School of Pharmacy are already lifting the mood and tempo of life Downtown and increasing the opportunities for residents to achieve higher education.

The UCONN School of Law continues its efforts to engage in our diverse community and I challenge them to train even more local talent. I have also extended the invitation to the UCONN School of Social Work to relocate to Hartford to ensure social justice and progress and be more accessible to the people who would benefit from their programs.

If that isn't enough, I'm now stepping things up a notch. I will lead the movement to recruit the UCONN Medical and Dental Schools to Hartford. As the job-hub of the State, it is essential that the Capital City be the focus of intense medical research, training and technology.

My philosophy of collaboration does not stop there. My Chief of Staff and I will spend a significant amount of time communicating and working with our Congressional and State Delegations, Governor Malloy and, with the City Council, improve intergovernmental cooperation. This will better ensure that identified funding opportunities – whether it is capital or community improvements, infrastructure upgrades, or project enhancers – are maximized.

Together, along with creative strategies and strong partnerships with the State and Congressional delegations, we can complete important projects:

- 1) Coltsville National Park
- 2) Capewell
- 3) Westbrook Village and Bowles Park
- 4) Swift Factory
- 5) Albany Avenue Streetscape
- 6) And our five active redevelopment areas: Downtown East, Downtown West, Downtown North, Parkville, and North Meadows.

It cannot be “business as usual” to achieve these and other goals. Last year, I led the charge of no new taxes and I continue to work today to close funding gap in a fiscally prudent manner. Government must look at itself in the mirror to be responsible, work smarter and be more efficient. We must also work with the business community and neighborhood activists to find fair and equitable solutions to the Fiscal Year 2011-12 budget dilemma.

My friends, we need comprehensive tax reform. Any reform must eliminate the unfair burden that business has been forced to bear over the past few years and simultaneously provide relief to residential property owners in a balanced and equitable way.

We need to reorganize city government in a way that increases efficiency and accountability. Last night, City Council enacted my amendments to pension ordinances for senior executives. These and other post employment benefits must be fiscally sound and in line with the business community

I will create an Office of Arts Leaders to help with state and federal advocacy. I will create an advisory committee that would be dedicated to a sharper focus on the Arts, Heritage, Tourism and Sports. It would promote the marketing of conventions and special events and leverage our many historical and cultural assets. This would also include the creation of a Center for Puerto Rican Arts and Culture at the Lyric Theatre and further the iQuilt effort to knit together our cultural assets make prominent use of our open space.

iQuilt is nationally recognized initiative spear-headed by The Bushnell--- an organization entrusted with preserving this living memorial to a Hartford innovator. Horace Bushnell made his mark on this City's history and we are all better off for it today.

Before him, it was Thomas Hooker--- a man who helped others find a better life for themselves and their families through education and democracy. This Rising Star Breakfast reminds us, that we--- as a collaboration of government, business, and community--- must also make our mark on Hartford's future: One City, One Plan to create opportunities together and provide for a better tomorrow.