

STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP ADDRESS – 2004

I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME EVERYONE TO THE REDFORD COMMUNITY CENTER AND TO THANK THE REDFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR ONCE AGAIN SPONSORING THIS ANNUAL EVENT.

I'VE ALWAYS HAD A GREAT WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHAMBER AND THE REDFORD BUSINESS COMMUNITY. ON THE WAY IN, YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THE SUPERVISOR'S CUP. THIS IS A NEW TRADITION ESTABLISHED THIS YEAR BY THE REDFORD AREA AUTO DEALERS AND MYSELF. THE CUP GOES TO THE WINNER OF THE ANNUAL REDFORD UNION, THURSTON FOOTBALL GAME. SPECIAL THANKS TO GEORGE MATICK CHEVROLET, STARK HICKEY FORD, BRUCE CAMPBELL DODGE, SNETHKAMP CHRYSLER, PAT MILLIKEN FORD AND LITTLE BILL'S TROPHIES FOR MAKING THE CUP POSSIBLE.

THIS IS MY EIGHTH YEAR AS SUPERVISOR AND MY EIGHTH STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP ADDRESS TO THE COMMUNITY. THIS WAS BY FAR THE HARDEST SPEECH I HAVE HAD TO PREPARE DURING MY TWO TERMS IN OFFICE.

POLITICAL LEADERS MUST BE POSITIVE. ANY LEADER MUST PERSEVERE IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD. A SENSE OF OPTIMISM REGARDING THE FUTURE IS A NECESSITY, BUT A GOOD POLITICIAN MUST ALSO CONNECT WITH HIS CONSTITUENCY. THEY MUST UNDERSTAND THE PEOPLE THEY SERVE EVERYDAY AND THE FACTORS THAT IMPACT THEM AND THEIR LIVES.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, REDFORD TOWNSHIP IS HURTING. WHETHER IT'S THE WORKING MOTHER WHOSE HUSBAND HAS LOST HIS FULL TIME JOB AND WHOSE FAMILY MEDICAL BENEFITS WILL SOON EXPIRE OR THE MID-LEVEL EXECUTIVES WHO ALSO HAVE BEEN GAINFULLY EMPLOYED IN THE CONSTRUCTION FIELD OR AUTOMOTIVE FIELD FOR

OVER 30 YEARS, BUT ARE LOOKING FOR NEW JOBS IN 2004, OR THE COLLEGE KID WHO GRADUATED LAST SPRING AND WANTS TO STAY IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN BUT WHO HAS NO SOLID JOB PROSPECTS AFTER SEARCHING MORE THAN HALF A YEAR, RESIDENTS IN OUR COMMUNITY HAVE BEEN IMPACTED BY THE ECONOMIC DOWN TURN OF THE LAST THREE YEARS.

BESIDES THESE ANECDOTAL STORIES, WHICH I HEAR, AND YOU HEAR EVERYDAY, THERE IS EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE. LAST YEAR IN OUR COMMUNITY SIXTY HOMES WERE FORECLOSED IN REDFORD. PEOPLE WERE NOT ABLE TO MEET MORTGAGE PAYMENTS AND WERE FORCED TO LEAVE. IN MY NINETEEN YEARS AS A REDFORD PUBLIC OFFICIAL, I HAVE NEVER SEEN A NUMBER THAT EXTREME. IN MY EXPERIENCE, THREE OR FOUR FORECLOSURES WOULD BE AN AVERAGE YEAR; EIGHT WOULD BE HIGH. IN 2003, 60 PROPERTY OWNERS LOST THEIR HOMES.

BUT REDFORD IS A SOLID MIDDLE CLASS COMMUNITY. YOU DON'T SEE ANY PROTESTS OR DEMONSTRATIONS OR EVIDENCE OF THOSE PERSONAL FINANCIAL TRAGEDIES. YOU SEE CITIZENS QUIETLY REACTING AND ADJUSTING AND MAKING DO AND HANGING ON HOPING THAT TOMORROW WILL BE BETTER. THE TIDE WILL CHANGE, A BREAK WILL COME AND HOPEFULLY MONEY WILL BEGIN TO SHOW UP IN THE HOUSEHOLD AND THINGS WILL GET BETTER. THEY ARE HARD WORKING DIGNIFIED PEOPLE.

YOUR TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT HAS REACTED IN MUCH THE SAME WAY THE LAST FOUR YEARS. AS A RESULT OF A SLOW ECONOMY, CUTS IN STATE SHARED REVENUES, REDUCTION FROM INVESTMENT INCOME, AND INCREASES IN HEALTH CARE, WE HAVE QUIETLY STRUGGLED TO MAKE ENDS MEET AND TO MAINTAIN QUALITY PUBLIC SERVICES IN OUR COMMUNITY.

FOUR YEARS AGO WE ELIMINATED BUDGETED POSITIONS AND CUT ALL UNNECESSARY CAPITAL OUTLAY AFTER THE 2000 CENSUS AND BEFORE THE BUDGET YEAR

BEGAN IN APRIL. OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS WE HAVE UTILIZED EARLY OUTS AND RETIREMENT INCENTIVES TO REDUCE OUR GENERAL FUND WORK FORCE BY THIRTY-EIGHT POSITIONS.

THESE POSITIONS INCLUDE CLERICAL STAFF, MAINTENANCE STAFF, NINE POLICE OFFICERS AND ONE FIRE FIGHTER.

THIS YEAR'S PROPOSED BUDGET INCLUDES LAYOFFS OF 12.5 MORE POSITIONS INCLUDING TWO DEPARTMENT HEADS AND MORE PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL.

TRADITIONALLY WHEN I STAND IN FRONT OF YOU, OUR BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING APRIL 1ST HAS BEEN VOTED ON BY THE BOARD. THIS YEAR THANKS TO STATE PUBLIC ACT 191 OF 2003, WE HAVE MORE TIME TO DEBATE OUR PLAN AND TO GIVE FINAL APPROVAL AFTER PUBLIC HEARINGS AND A BOARD VOTE.

THIS EXTRA TIME IS ESPECIALLY CRITICAL THIS YEAR AS SOME OF THE PROPOSED BUDGET IMPACTS ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING GROUPS WHICH MUST DISCUSS AND VOTE ON SOME OF THE PROPOSALS BEFORE THEY CAN BE IMPLEMENTED.

THE POLICE OFFICERS ARE VOTING ON A PROPOSAL THIS WEEK THAT COULD LEAD TO THE TOWNSHIP DROPPING ITS CHALLENGE TO A STATE ACT 312 ARBITRATION AWARD IN THE MICHIGAN COURT OF APPEALS AND SETTLING A FIVE-YEAR CONTRACT. FIRE FIGHTERS MET LAST NIGHT TO LOOK AT WAYS TO FURTHER CUT STAFFING LEVELS WITHOUT SACRIFICING SERVICE OR SAFETY. THIS WOULD BE ON TOP OF STAFFING REDUCTIONS AGREED TO IN THEIR LAST NEGOTIATED CONTRACT.

EVEN WITH THESE CHANGES IN LABOR AGREEMENTS THE BUDGET REMAINS TENUOUS FOR 2004-2005. AS HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE DAILY NEWSPAPERS, THE STATE OF MICHIGAN IS FACING ANOTHER BILLION-DOLLAR SHORTFALL. WE ANTICIPATE NO HELP, AND IN FACT, ARE CONTEMPLATING YET MORE REVENUE CUTS FROM LANSING.

IF WE CAN RESOLVE CRITICAL ISSUES AT THE BARGAINING TABLE TO BALANCE THIS YEAR'S BUDGET, I WILL ASK THE BOARD TO THEN CONSIDER MILLAGE PROPOSALS FOR

VOTERS WHICH WOULD HELP US MAINTAIN CRITICAL PUBLIC SAFETY STAFFING IN OUR TOWNSHIP. THE ELIMINATION OF FOUR PUBLIC SAFETY DISPATCHERS AND THREE FIRE FIGHTERS CAN BE ACHIEVED IN THE SHORT TERM. BUT ANY FURTHER STATE CUTBACKS OR BUDGETARY SHORTFALLS LOCALLY WILL AFFECT OUR ABILITY TO MAINTAIN QUALITY POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES IN OUR COMMUNITY.

THE NEXT SIX WEEKS WILL BE CRITICAL IN SORTING THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT SET OF ISSUES. IF PROGRESS CAN'T BE MADE, I AM PREPARED TO OFFER MORE SERVICE CUTBACKS TO BALANCE OUR TOWNSHIP BUDGET.

MY PARENTS WERE RAISED IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND THEY PREACHED FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY TO ME. THEY OFTEN SAID, "THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH". IN TODAY'S AMERICA, THAT THINKING IS RAPIDLY DISAPPEARING. IN WASHINGTON WHERE LARGE TAX CUTS HAVE BEEN ENACTED, THE LAST THREE YEARS THE CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE OVERSEEN THE LARGEST EXPANSION IN GOVERNMENT SPENDING IN A GENERATION. OVER THE PAST TWO FISCAL YEARS ANNUAL FEDERAL SPENDING HAS GROWN 16 PER CENT TO 2.25 TRILLION DOLLARS, THE LARGEST TWO YEAR SPENDING HIKE IN MORE THAN A DECADE. A 5.6 TRILLION DOLLAR SURPLUS HAS BEEN TURNED INTO A 500 BILLION DOLLAR DEFICIT. SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE YOU CAN HAVE ALL THE GOVERNMENT YOU WANT AND NO ONE HAS TO PAY THE TAB. STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BY LAW ARE FORBIDDEN FROM OVER SPENDING THEIR TREASURIES. WE CAN'T SPEND MONEY WE DON'T HAVE AND WE CAN'T PRINT DOLLARS LIKE OUR COLLEAGUES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

AS THE CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIAL OF REDFORD, I PROMISE YOU I WILL DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO BALANCE OUR BUDGET.

AS I SAID EARLIER, TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT HAS REACTED QUIETLY AND EFFICIENTLY OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS TO OUR BUDGETARY PROBLEMS. THE BOARD, DEPARTMENT HEADS AND STAFF HAVE STEPPED UP TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR CITIZENS IN

THE FACE OF PERSONNEL CUTBACKS. EVERY DEPARTMENT IS DOING MORE WITH LESS FROM TWELVE-HOUR SHIFTS IN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO REDUCED MANNING IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TO REORGANIZATION PLANS ACROSS ALL DEPARTMENTS TO REASSIGN JOB TASKS FROM ELIMINATED POSITIONS.

IN MY EIGHT YEARS AS SUPERVISOR, WE HAVE WORKED HARD TO CUT COSTS AND IMPROVE SERVICE. MY DEPUTY SUPERVISOR JOSEPH BOMMARITO HAS PLAYED A CRITICAL ROLE IN THOSE EFFORTS.

JOE WORKED TO IMPLEMENT MY IDEA FOR A PURCHASE CARD SYSTEM, WHICH HAS CUT INTERNAL PURCHASING PAPER WORK BY 80%. HE OVERSAW THE UPGRADE OF OUR PHONE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM WHICH HAS SAVED \$75,000 PER YEAR IN PHONE CHARGES AND WILL MEAN EVEN MORE SAVINGS WHEN THE FINANCING NOTE IS RETIRED NEXT YEAR. HE WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH THE SIDEWALK PROGRAM THAT HAS SAVED TOWNSHIP TAXPAYERS A MILLION DOLLARS A YEAR IN LAWSUIT SETTLEMENTS. HE BROUGHT IN OUR ELECTRIC CHOICE PURCHASING PROGRAM, WHICH HAS SAVED OVER \$60,000 IN UTILITY BILLINGS. AS DEPUTY SUPERVISOR, HE HAS BEEN A GREAT ADMINISTRATOR AND AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS AND BOTH SENIOR CITIZEN CLUBS.

AFTER SEVEN YEARS, JOE WANTS TO SETTLE DOWN AND SPEND MORE TIME WITH HIS GRAND KIDS AND GO WHERE IT'S WARM. JOE WILL BE RETIRING FROM THE DEPUTY SUPERVISOR'S POSITION THIS APRIL.

AS I SAID EARLIER, IT IS A LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REMAIN OPTIMISTIC IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY, AND IN REDFORD DESPITE OUR SEVERE BUDGETARY PROBLEMS OUR GLASS IS HALF FULL, NOT HALF EMPTY.

I WAS ELECTED EIGHT YEARS AGO ON A PROMISE TO "REDEVELOP" REDFORD TOWNSHIP. OUR COMMUNITY WAS BUILT IN THE 40'S, 50'S AND 60'S. IN THE 1970'S WE HAD A POPULATION OF 72,000 PEOPLE WITH MORE THAN 30 CHURCHES, A BOOMING

SCHOOL POPULATION AND A DOMINANT AMERICAN AUTO INDUSTRY. OUR WORLD, OUR COUNTRY AND OUR COMMUNITY HAVE CHANGED SINCE THEN. THE KEY TO OUR CONTINUED PROSPERITY MUST BE TO "REDEVELOP" OUR INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND RESIDENTIAL TAX BASE TO MOVE FORWARD AND MAINTAIN THE ATTRACTIVE VIABLE COMMUNITY THAT WE ARE.

LAST YEAR THERE WERE 51 NEW HOMES, 361 RESIDENTIAL ADDITIONS AND 43 NEW GARAGES BUILT IN REDFORD TOWNSHIP.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY CAN BE SEEN IN THE SLOW MOVING PROGRESS OF THE ASHLEY PARK CONDOMINIUM PROJECT ON SCHOOLCRAFT BETWEEN TELEGRAPH AND BEECH DALY TO THE RAPID PROGRESS BEING MADE ON INSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS LIKE OUR NEW TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY AND THE MHSDA HOUSING PROJECT AT PRESBYTERIAN VILLAGE ON SIX MILE ROAD.

THE VOLNEY PARK DEVELOPMENT AT SEVEN MILE AND LEXINGTON IS AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF WHAT THIS ADMINISTRATION SET OUT TO ACCOMPLISH EIGHT YEARS AGO. SIX AND A HALF ACRES WERE PURCHASED BY A DEVELOPER FROM THE REDFORD UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT AND WORKING COOPERATIVELY WITH THE TOWNSHIP, TWO BUILDERS HAVE 20 HOMES IN VARIOUS STAGES OF OCCUPANCY AND CONSTRUCTION.

THE ORIGINAL PLAN CALLED FOR 56 NEW SINGLE FAMILY HOMES BUT WHEN THE NEW DELAWARE STREET IS CONSTRUCTED NEXT SPRING AS MANY AS 20 MORE SINGLE FAMILY HOMES COULD BE PLOTTED AND BUILT FOR A TOTAL OF 76 UNITS. THIS IS ADDING A NEW GENERATION OF HOME BUYERS AND CHILDREN TO REDFORD TOWNSHIP.

LATE LAST YEAR THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY ANNOUNCED PLANS TO VACATE THEIR PARTS DEPARTMENT AND ADVANCED ENGINEERING DIVISION AT TELEGRAPH AND GLENDALE. PRIVATE INVESTORS WILL SOON BE ASKING OUR BROWNFIELD AUTHORITY TO APPROVE A PLAN WHICH WILL RENEW AND RESTORE THAT PROPERTY FOR INDUSTRIAL USES

IN THE FUTURE. THE BUILDING AND ITS NEARLY ONE MILLION SQUARE FEET OF SPACE WILL CONTINUE TO BE A VIABLE PROPERTY WITH THESE BUILDING UPGRADES.

FOR SEVERAL YEARS THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS OF THE WALGREEN CORPORATION SEEKING SITES IN OUR COMMUNITY. THIS MORNING THEY FILED A REZONING REQUEST TO BUILD ON THE CORNER OF FIVE MILE AND BEECH DALY ON THE SITE CURRENTLY OCCUPIED BY THE REDFORD GRILL AND THE TOWNSHIP HARDWARE. THEY SEEK TO CONSTRUCT A BRAND NEW MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR FACILITY.

LAST YEAR THE SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL FOR GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED IN ITS LONG RANGE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORECAST THAT THEY EXPECT THE POPULATION IN OUR SEVEN COUNTY REGION TO INCREASE BY 600,000 PEOPLE IN THE YEAR 2030. THE PREDICTIONS ARE THAT 400,000 NEW HOUSING UNITS WILL BE NEEDED TO ACCOMMODATE THIS INCREASE IN POPULATION.

LAST YEAR I TOLD YOU ABOUT CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL AND THEIR DECISION TO RELOCATE TO NOVI IN 2006 AND OUR DESIRE TO ACQUIRE THAT PROPERTY FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

TODAY I AM HAPPY TO ANNOUNCE THAT OUR DEVELOPMENT PARTNER, BILTMORE PROPERTIES, HAS REACHED A PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH CATHOLIC CENTRAL TO PURCHASE THE BUILDING AND ADJACENT PROPERTY FOR 5.5 MILLION DOLLARS.

THIS IS JUST THE FIRST STEP IN A VERY LONG JOURNEY DURING OUR DUE DILIGENCE PERIOD. OVER THE NEXT 90 DAYS, WE HAVE MUCH WORK TO ACCOMPLISH. REDFORD AND THE BILTMORE GROUP MUST ESTABLISH A BROWNFIELD PLAN, NEGOTIATE A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT, AND CREATE A FRAME WORK FOR PLANNING AND ZONING REQUIREMENTS, WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF 300 TO 400 SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS ON THE CATHOLIC CENTRAL SITE.

THIS CALLS FOR MUCH INTERNAL WORK AND INPUT FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY. IT'S AN AMBITIOUS GOAL, BUT WE AIM FOR SUCCESS BY JULY 1ST OF THIS YEAR TO CLOSE THE PURCHASE.

SO AS I SAID, IN REDFORD THE GLASS IS HALF FULL, NOT HALF EMPTY. I COULD GO ON ABOUT THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THIS COMMUNITY ALL AFTERNOON. I AM PROUD OF THE TOWNSHIP WORK FORCE WHO HAS GIVEN 110 PERCENT IN THE FACE OF JOB CUTBACKS. ALL DEPARTMENTS COMMAND MY RESPECT. THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT DESERVES KUDOS, AS DOES OUR DISTRICT COURT FOR LEVELING AN EYESORE, THE FORMER RAM'S HORN AT TELEGRAPH AND PLYMOUTH, WHICH NOW HOPEFULLY WILL BE SOLD AS CLEAN SITE FOR MORE REDEVELOPMENT. LAST NIGHT, THE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVED A WATER LOSS STUDY TO INSURE THE FISCAL STABILITY OF OUR WATER SYSTEM AND CALLED FOR A MORATORIUM ON WATER RATE INCREASES FROM THE CITY OF DETROIT. MUCH WORK NEEDS TO BE DONE.

THE JOB OF SUPERVISOR IS CHALLENGING AND REWARDING. 2004 BRINGS HUGE MOUNTAINS TO CLIMB FOR THE BOARD AND THE COMMUNITY. I LOOK FORWARD TO LEADING REDFORD THROUGH 2004 AND BEYOND. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME TODAY.