

Thank the people of Braintree - I am genuinely excited and privileged to be here with you tonight to begin another term as your Mayor. As I hope you know, I truly enjoy the challenges of this position and I sincerely appreciate your support and the many partnerships in creating a community that makes us proud.

I pledge to you here tonight to bring the same energy, enthusiasm and commitment to this term as I have during the past terms as your Mayor.

For eight years now, with the inception of our Mayoral/Council government – we have been on the move.

It has been strokes of bolder leadership, in implementing a new government with consolidation, efficiencies and technology, Coupled with the smaller gestures of planting trees, extending town hall office hours, and purchasing alternative energy vehicles.

The big items and the little ones all contribute to a mindset of making our government work for the people we serve.

Status quo was not an option eight years ago – nor is it today.

The secret is out – it is something that many of us known for a while and others have discovered in recent years. Braintree is an exceptional and vibrant community.

Rich in history as noted with our 375th year and primed for strong future.

The resources that we possess – our location, our independent water supply, our own energy power supply, our strong schools, the safeness of our community – our business community and our neighborhoods all add up to a quality of life that we are fortunate to share with one another.

We have managed our finances well – adopting sound fiscal policies, achieving healthy reserves and improving our bond rating to AA+ as we continued to focus on upgrading our roads,

renovating our public buildings, improving our recreational areas, adding personnel to public safety units and in hiring more teachers. And, we have maintained one of the lowest residential tax rates in Norfolk County.

We will continue to prioritize and focus on our fiscal stewardship – and we will continue to focus on good management because it is critical in supporting our fiscal responsibilities.

Having a strong financial foundation allows us to create the type of community we want.

Our focus on fiscal responsibility, strong management of municipal departments and operations allows us to highlight our -

- Good academic performance in our schools.

- Good public safety operation to through community policing.
- Good programs for our seniors and veterans.
- Good parks and recreational programs that improve the quality of life for families.
- Good road and building improvements
- Good economic and business development projects.

Good work generates good results.

As optimistic as I am today about our town - we can do better.

Allow me to outline a few items on our agenda:

Beyond our borders, we have become regional partners with neighboring communities, including Boston, in creating

a life sciences corridor initiative to attract good jobs in the biomedical field and to assist in regional linkages that will empower our greater Boston area to grow economically.

That allows us all to intersect with one another in a way that can strengthen our region. Braintree is the transportation hub of the South Shore. Our town is the pivot point in which to head north or south – by rail or car – and thus our location makes us a vital contributor to regional partnerships – partnerships that offer value to taxpayers and thoughtful approaches to better serve our residents.

Specifically to Braintree –

Our school buildings need additional work. Over the past eight years we have spent \$16 million of municipal funds and leveraged state assistance to physically upgrade our existing schools including WiFi.

Every school has received attention.

We will do more over the next four years.

Working with the school committee, the town council and our new Superintendent, Dr. Frank Hackett we shall have a comprehensive plan in place in the coming months on to how we will manage our growing student enrollment. That plan will need to be implemented with a financial commitment to add classrooms to our schools to provide the necessary funding to accommodate our students.

Our students, our teachers and our principals are performing well. It is up to us to see that the academic performance in our schools is

matched by our investment to the physical improvements and renovations that are required to upgrade our schools and make them the state of the art classrooms that our students deserve.

In addition to serving our students we will also provide and enhanced senior center in 2016 with and expansion that will allow us to offer more programs for our maturing population.

With a growing school enrollment and a senior population of 31% age 65 and over – we have the right population mix of families that truly compliments one another and makes our town a better place for all.

When I talk about a better place for all – I want to take this opportunity to highlight our work with Veterans – I say this with Bravado – with all the support we offer with hiring practices, tax reduction and other services – I can't think of another community that embraces Veterans as we do.

We are a patriotic town – and proud of it.

I want to talk seriously about something that has been at the forefront of the nightly news for a long time now, and is a main focus throughout the Commonwealth — the growing opioid issue.

With Thanks to a lot of caring people we've ended any denial and are now pulling the oars in the same direction of the friends, family members and health providers of those affected.

In 2011 we established Braintree's community partnership on substance abuse. Today, we are in the process of re-organizing and strengthening the coalition.

We have held a series of public forums to provide information and now with the availability of Narcan to our police and fire as well as in our schools we have saved lives and registered our serious statement that we are not giving up on those who may suffer with addiction.

School efforts, Police and Fire efforts. Town coalition efforts. Regional partners with DA Morrissey and Sheriff Bellotti are all positive and important resources that will allow us to build a positive and productive plan of attack against opiate usage and the other negatives that confront our youth.

Success in this area will not be an easy path nor easily noted. But we shall continue to confront it – because we must!

I believe that while opiates are a major concern, we should broaden the conversation and reach out to our young people to understand their issues as it relates to mental and physical health including obesity and suicide.

Being a teenager today is tough. We've all experienced that time in our lives – but today, despite all of the positives of social media there exists many negatives – cyberbullying and misinformation – Kids can't get away from it.

We need to focus on our students wellbeing – and to let each one know – that we are here to support them every step of the way.

It is with that focus that we will look to build a new youth center in our town over the next four years.

This year our nation will elect a new President.

Every national election means that we are in for a year of intense partisanship and division. Pundits on both sides of the political spectrum often tell us how their particular philosophy has all of the answers, while those with opposing views are not just wrong, they are dangerous.

Here in Braintree, the rightful home of two Presidents, we have shown that there is a better way to govern. Not just having respect for differing political viewpoints, but putting a collection of ideas and visions into practice.

We have been conservative in our budgeting and aggressive in infrastructure improvements. We have recognized that government cannot solve every problem but have never hesitated to offer assistance to a resident in need. We have governed by taking a path that incorporates moderation and pragmatism.

We have built a better Braintree to be a better community for all.

It is with that mindset that I take the oath to continue to serve as your Mayor – we should be proud of what we accomplished – and as we start fresh today - let us all pledge that over the next four years that we shall maintain the philosophy and practice of respect for one another and positive results for Braintree!

- **Let's go to Work!**