

**State of City Address**  
**Mayor Pro-Tem Kurt C. Hack**  
**May 17, 2007**

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. For yet another year of hosting this important event, I would like to personally thank Sheryl Gerald and the entire Clawson Chamber of Commerce. I would also like to show gratitude to my fellow City Council members, the administrators, our numerous civic volunteers, and the residents of this humble city. For without them, it would not be possible to stand before you today to discuss our accomplishments and our strategy for the future. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge our dedicated City employees... the people who interact everyday with our citizens. If all of us had to work under the constant scrutiny of the public eye, we could only hope to fare so well.

The City of Clawson is proof-positive that success truly does beget success! As we look around us, it is hard to miss the signs of progress that has become Clawson's recent trademark. From the rebuilding of our infrastructure to changes in our administration to reinventing our downtown to the **millions of dollars invested** in new development, we are truly in the midst of a changing city!

Whether you do business on Fourteen Mile Road or live on Marc Avenue, citizens of this community no longer have to make excuses for their roads. No longer will we simply patch a problem, because we cannot afford to do anything else. Finally, no longer will the City be forced to be reactive instead of proactive in protecting our water supplies. Instead, we have embarked on the **largest public works project in over fifty years**.

The residents of this community are to thank for all of these successes. For these residents are the ones that decided to invest back into their community by voting in an infrastructure bond. The passing of this bond has been the impetus for many of these projects, and many more to come. As a steward of the public trust and fellow Clawsonite, I am grateful for the trust you have given us. We will continue to deliver on the promise of an infrastructure we can all take pride in.

Speaking of delivering on promises, we have delivered to you a balanced budget that maintains the **highest level of city services** in the Detroit region and continues to invest in our future. Furthermore, this administration continues our sound fiscal policies that have earned us the **highest bonding and credit ratings** available. Participation and confidence in government is critical for promoting progress throughout all sectors of civic life. This administration continues with the policy of transparency, openness, and accountability in all City affairs.

The police department has moved its technology forward by adding to its inventory less-than-lethal weaponry and in-car video. The addition of these items reduces our legal liability and improves our abilities to maintain the quality service we deserve. Overseeing these changes, we now have a permanent Chief of Police: Harry Anderson. Chief Anderson has twenty-three years of experience with the City and has worked in all facets of the department. Through his leadership, the goal is to increase police visibility and reinforce community-style policing.

We have completed our citywide survey to determine what is important to our residents and how they feel about the services provided to them. This assessment also provides a baseline for us to measure improvements in the future. In short order, we were able to improve our sidewalk replacement programs to a more common-sense approach and establish pay-as-you go brush pickup. Both of these items were directly attributable to the survey results.

We have also maintained our promise to our new and existing businesses in the downtown. By updating our ordinances to compel landowners to improve and maintain the properties in Clawson's most visible areas, we can assure new businesses that their investment in Clawson is **an investment that will deliver well into the future.**

As business owners and engineering studies have told us, parking is an issue for Clawson. For this reason we have created the framework for shared parking agreements. This is a common-sense approach that will allow the City to help negotiate parking arrangements with existing property owners to augment public lots and other private business needs. This same framework also establishes the ability to create a fund for **future parking improvements** throughout the City so we can sustain the needs of future growth.

Another of our most visible corridors, North Main Street, is slated for vast improvements in 2008. These improvements include the replacement of pavement and on-street parking. In fact, we will see **on-street parking on South Main Street** as early as this summer! We are well on our way to getting back to our vision of a pedestrian-friendly downtown with storefront parking and an in-demand commercial real estate market.

The question has to be asked... how can we hold property owners accountable for improvements to their property when our own properties are in need of upgrades? It is time to get our own house in order! Façade and landscape upgrades to City Hall and the Blair Memorial Library are forthcoming in the very near future. These enhancements will help us lead the charge of beautifying our downtown environment while maintaining our credibility with our neighbors.

These are troubling financial times for many of our neighboring communities. The challenges they face are the same as ours: rising healthcare costs, reduction of state-shared revenues, unstable state economy, and rising energy costs. Governor Granholm has made it abundantly clear that her administration wants consolidation of city and school services for inner-ring Detroit suburbs. For this reason we will be looking for ways for the City of Clawson to become the **consolidators rather than consolidatees**. In short, now is the time to market Clawson to provide services to our surrounding communities to reduce their costs and bolster our revenue.

Clawson, along with other Metro Detroit cities and throughout the world, is feeling the effects of pollution. The Detroit area has ranked among the top ten most polluted cities according to the American Lung Association. Such pollution can contribute to heart disease, lung cancer, and asthma. As elected officials, we have the responsibility to not only inform, but also take immediate action to reverse the course of localized air pollution and global climate change. You will see renewed efforts towards recycling, water conservation, promoting energy efficient lifestyles, reduction of our paper dependency, and various ways to reduce our carbon footprint. It is time for us to **think globally and act locally.**

Last year we spoke of the anatomy of a Clawsonite. What is it that makes Clawson a source of pride and a beacon of fortitude for its residents? The answer is simple: the volunteers. The citizens that decide that they are going to make a difference are the ones that make Clawson what it is. That is one of the great advantages of being in a small community; **one person can make a huge difference.**

An example of this volunteerism is celebrated today with the presentation of the Clint West award to Chuck Palmer. Mr. Palmer has spent a lifetime giving back to the community through his works with the Lion's Club, Optimist Club, City of Clawson, and numerous other achievements. His accomplishments have made a profound difference in the City of Clawson and its surrounding communities.

Many unsung heroes within Clawson also contribute to what makes Clawson great. These are people that give their time and talent to those areas that are critically needed right now. I am speaking of the members of our Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority, Zoning Board of Appeals, Parks & Recreation Board, and the various other committees and boards that have contributed to past and present success throughout the City.

So now it is up to us, all of us, to continue the effort of rebuilding Clawson together. The only way we can succeed is through the strength of each other – for this project is far larger than any one person or group. How can you contribute to Clawson's success? Do you possess some skill that could better your community? Could you contribute as the next community leader, project manager, skilled tradesman, storyteller, baseball coach, or can you just provide innovative ideas in a progressive environment? The future of Clawson lies with those that are bold enough to give back to their community and make a stand for what is important to them. Even those that do not have the time can contribute; all I ask of you is that you spread the news that **Clawson is back!**

I am optimistic of our future and the destination we are rebuilding together. We have come this far because of the people we see among us and the people that put us here. Sure, we may debate, discuss, and sometimes disagree but ultimately we share in a common love for this city and the pride in what we have accomplished. In the end, we know that our success will only compound against itself to give us the city we envision and deserve.

Thank you for your continued faith and commitment to our cause.

***Audentes Fortuna Iuvat***  
***"Fortune Favors the Bold"***