

Stamford is a CT success story, says Mayor Martin

BARRY LYTTON APRIL 10, 2019



STAMFORD — The success story of state — that’s how Mayor David Martin described his city Wednesday.

“The bottom line — and I think you know this — is that Stamford is succeeding,” Martin told a crowd of some 200 builders, brokers, bigs and business people.

“We’ve accomplished a lot,” he said at the annual State of City address hosted by the Chamber of Commerce. But “a lot more is in progress,” he added.

In his address — short by the verbose mayor’s standards, which he joked is the two-hour mark — Martin said the city remains the state’s “crown jewel” — paraphrasing the term used by business publication Westfair.

He pointed to a booming housing market, with thousands of apartment units built in recent years, and businesses flocking to open offices and headquarters downtown despite headwinds such as a flourishing mold crisis that he estimated will claim between \$65 and \$75 million over the next three years.

The mold, which overtook an entire West Side magnet elementary school, pushing students and teachers into South End office space for the past year and the next, has taken money from several parts of the city budget, Martin said.

“The biggest issue is Westover school,” he said.

Road paving — which Martin said is a priority — got \$4.8 million this fiscal year and was another big part of Martin’s address. He’s budgeted \$5.6 million for Fiscal Year 2019-20, though mold may skim some, he said.

“We’re paving and you can see we’ve got a lot of catching up to do,” he said, adding the city is now progressing after years of lackluster attention to its pockmarked streets.

Martin said lack of violent crime is another bright spot, but lamented a rise in property crimes, which he blamed on a trend of statewide car theft and car break-ins.

“Lock your cars and don’t leave something that looks valuable,” he said.

Other than those points, Martin’s speech hewed closely to last year’s address, although this year he declined to don a hard hat.

He cited many of the same traffic improvements and state projects now underway, including three bridge replacements.

One twist from last year was his assessment of the Atlantic Street rail bridge replacement, which has knocked out car traffic on a slice of Atlantic Street for months. Martin on Wednesday said the project is going smoothly.

Last year he predicted “it’s going to be very bad.”

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