



STATE OF THE CITY

MAYOR BRANDON M. SCOTT



Mayor Scott:

The last time I spoke to Congressman Elijah Cummings,

He told me something that I think about every day.

“Brandon, something that I love about you is that you treat everybody the same.

Whether they are your biggest ally, opponent or just a person on the street — never lose that.

You’ll need it even more in the future — and sooner than you know.

One day, your title is going to be gone,

And you’re going to be back to being Brandon from Park Heights,

And you have to be able to go back and walk out on that corner where you grew up,

And people still treat you the same.”

I live by that now.

As a proud son of this city, it’s my job to do right by the people who raised me,

The people who look up to me,

And the people who will carry on the work long after I’m gone.

Every day in this job is an opportunity to build a better, safer, healthier Baltimore,

For every single person who calls our city home.

And I mean every single person.

Lottie dottie and everybody, as the Congressman would say.

Those of us who’ve been around the block have seen up close what it looks like when we only give opportunity and investment to certain neighborhoods.

Ultimately, it holds all of us back.

And it goes against everything that makes Baltimore the greatest city in America.

In Baltimore, we take care of each other.

We are the toughest, grittiest, kindest, funniest people you’ll find anywhere.

It’s my job to make sure City government is matching that energy each and every day.

That means being out in the community.

Whether it’s a neighborhood meeting or a job fair,

A community cleanup, funeral, or a state championship football game,

We’re there.

We’re there on the ground when crises happen,

And we stay to support long after they end.



We're delivering investment and impact to every neighborhood, block by block.

Because the people of this city deserve nothing less.

Especially the folks who lived through decades of intentional disinvestment,

And still kept fighting on behalf of their community.

Leaders like Regina Hammond and Yolanda Jiggetts, who believed in their neighbors and their neighborhoods — even when few others did.

Regina Hammond:

My name is Regina Hammond. I'm proud to serve as the Founder and Executive Director of the Rebuild Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization. Tonight, I stand here representing a community that refused to be defined by vacancy. Johnston Square was once known for boarded-up homes, empty lots, and disinvestment.

But we made a decision: We would NOT wait to be saved. We created a vision plan. We cleaned our blocks. We planted hundreds of trees, created beautiful murals and gardens. We showed up AGAIN and AGAIN. And because we organized, when opportunity came, we were ready.

Mayor Scott, your administration and the City have been real partners in this work. With your support, we've transformed abandoned properties into quality, mixed-income housing, and empty lots into green spaces, parks, and gathering places. Johnston Square is a model for redevelopment because the City invested, AND the community stepped up. You can't succeed without both.

What you see in our neighborhood is PROOF that Baltimore's story can change, and that redevelopment can happen with residents, not to them. If it can happen in Johnston Square, it can happen in your neighborhood. If you want to know more, look for the blue and yellow t-shirts. We are JUST getting started.

Yolanda Jiggetts:

I'm Yolanda Jiggetts and I am the CEO of Park Heights Renaissance.

I don't have to explain the importance of lived experience to our Mayor, who also grew up in Park Heights.

That's why I'm really proud to stand with him in this moment to celebrate progress in OUR HOOD.

Our strategy has been simple: strengthen who's here, repair homes, attract homeowners, support businesses, and create safe community spaces so the families who built our community can stay and thrive.

Early on, our community leaders and partners in Park Heights were VERY frustrated and made one thing crystal clear:

They wanted a real seat at the table in development decisions.

So — we brought our community to the table. Through charrettes with more than 400 residents, youth, and partners,

we formalized our theory of action,

Which is Collaboration over Competition, meaning we believe in partnerships to leverage greater investment.

That's how projects like Loyola Northway were born.

We transformed a block once marked by significant vacancy and blight.



Today:

Over 12 new homeowners,

home repairs for legacy owners

And this last phase is set for new affordable homes

The bonus: over \$4M in private investment.

This Mayor has been there through these early indicators of success:

New apartment buildings.

The newest Main Street corridor in Baltimore

Pimlico Redevelopment,

Last year, we kicked off Preakness 150 with our 4th Annual “Spider” Anderson Music & Arts Festival,

And many more partner projects are in the pipeline.

The momentum is REAL.

Because When residents are at the table, we don’t just see development, we see sustainable economic growth across Baltimore City.

Mayor Scott:

Thank you both for your leadership and your service.

The crisis of vacant homes is one of the biggest challenges our city faces.

It’s also one of the most visible.

At their peak, there were 16,000 vacant properties citywide.

Over the last few years, we’ve been able to bring that number down to 11,871,

Eliminating 1 in 4 vacant properties.

Now while that is great progress, I know that vacants are still a pain for all of us.

They pull down neighborhoods and can be frustrating in many ways,

Including when city crews board them up,

Only to have the boards taken off almost immediately.

That’s why I piloted Clearboarding, a new way to board vacants.

We’re now investing in clear boarding across the city —

Using strong, clear material to secure vacant buildings,

Which prevents fires and break-ins,

And looks much better than plywood.

I want to shout out the Bloomberg Innovation team for their partnership on this.



But that's just the beginning.

We're taking a block by block approach to end this crisis for good over the next 13 years.

In Johnston Square, we transformed 42 vacant lots into 109 mixed-income apartments,

And the first new branch of the Pratt Library in 15 years.

In Park Heights, we converted a vacant lot to 100 new homes for seniors,

With 150 additional homes and a new library to come.

Along Fulton Avenue.

What was once 20 vacant homes is now 20 new rowhomes.

We're talking about entire blocks of vacants that have been rehabilitated.

This kind of revitalization is unheard of.

We got here by taking innovative strategies like TIF funds,

Something normally reserved for high-profile development areas like Harbor East,

And applying them to vacant properties across the city.

Last year, we issued the first round of TIF funding,

Offering \$29 million.

We received \$389 million in offers.

That's 13 times more than what we offered.

Now ReBuild Metro, Rebirth Development, Neighborhood Housing Services, Blank Slate Development, and Black Women BUILD,

Are putting that funding to good use, renovating vacants citywide.

These projects mean more affordable housing options and more opportunities for those looking to buy a home.

When you consider incentives like Buy Back the Block and Live Baltimore's Trolley Tours,

Home ownership becomes a real possibility for so many folks in our city and beyond.

Folks like Kourtnee.

Kourtnee Turner:

I'm Kourtnee. And a few years ago, while living in Tulsa, I saw a post on Instagram about incentives for homebuyers in Maryland. After some research, I learned about Live Baltimore's Trolley Tours. I decided to attend a tour, and entered the lottery to receive the \$5,000 grant. While in Tulsa, I was watching on Facebook, waiting to see if I'd get picked. I was so nervous. I got picked 18th out of 20 draws. It was definitely a nail biter.

I also received a \$10,000 first time homebuyer grant. With that money, I was able to buy a 3-bedroom home in the Pen Lucy neighborhood. To be a homeowner is a dream come true. Today, I'm a neighborhood ambassador for Live Baltimore. I meet with young people all the time, and I tell them: You can do the same thing. You can be a homeowner. You can own a piece of this city.



Kourtnee's story is the story of so many young, successful people,
Especially young Black women,
Who are a driving force behind Baltimore's Renaissance.

To all the Black women across the country,
Looking for a place to put down roots,
And feel loved and supported every day.

Come to Baltimore!

We want folks here who will help us grow our city and build on our momentum.

But we also want to make sure we're protecting the legacy residents like Yolanda and Ms. Regina,
Who have put blood, sweat, and tears into their communities for decades.

We know that many of these legacy residents face significant property tax bills that threaten to push them out of their homes.

Currently, we give these residents the option to defer their tax payment each year —

Which eventually leads to large bills — tens of thousands of dollars, in some cases — that just aren't realistic for most older adults to repay.

So, tonight I'm proud to announce a pilot program to wipe out property tax debt for legacy residents.

Baltimoreans who are over 65,

Have owned their home for more than 10 years,

And make less than \$73,000 a year,

Can qualify next year — if they sign up by April 15.

As Baltimore continues to grow, we have to do everything we can to protect the folks who built our city.

But to be clear:

We're not just supporting homeowners!

We know that the cost of housing — not just in Baltimore but nationwide — is way too high.

For renters, that means significant up front costs — sometimes thousands and thousands of dollars just to move into a new place.

Which is why tonight, I'm proud to announce that we are funding the Security Deposit Assistance Program proposed by Vice President Middleton.

This program will help low-income residents who have found an apartment to rent,

But don't have the money in-hand for a security deposit.

It's especially focused on residents transitioning out of homelessness or temporary housing.

If you qualify, you can apply for up to \$2,000 to cover a security deposit.



But we aren't stopping there,
Because we know that with energy prices on the rise across the country,
Everybody's BGE bill is high.
So, to support homeowners and renters, we are launching an Energy Stability Fund,
Which will provide up to \$1,500 to help folks make ends meet and stay in their homes.
But of course — it's not just renters and homeowners who are dealing with higher energy costs.
Small business owners are too.
These are the folks who power Baltimore's economy.
70% of the goods and services we produce come from small and medium sized businesses!
So, I've directed the Baltimore Development Corporation to set up a program,
Which will award up to \$25,000 in grant funding to small and medium sized businesses, to help with their energy bills.
To these business owners: we know that you're struggling with these costs.
And we are here to support you.
Each one of these investments represents the stronger, healthier future we're building for our city:
A future where people like Kourtnee can afford to live and chase their dreams,
A future where legacy residents can age in place,
A future where folks in neighborhoods like Johnston Square and Park Heights can build generational wealth,
A future where — together — we are finally solving the problems that have plagued our city for generations.
We know that it's possible.
Because we are already making progress in ways that many people thought would never happen.
In 18 of the 41 years I've been alive, Baltimore lost over 300 people to homicide.
That's over 300 parents, neighbors, friends, children, loved ones — receiving the worst call of their lives.
Those of us who've had to make those calls,
And especially those who've had to receive them,
Know exactly what is at stake in this work.
I've been on both sides of that call.
It never gets any easier. [...]
On October 20th of last year, the woman on the other end of the line was Ms. Patricia Phillips.

Patricia Phillips:

I'm Patricia Phillips and on October 20th, 2025 my son Stephen Phillips and my daughter Destiny Wooten —



who was pregnant at the time — were both shot. I found out when my daughter was going into surgery that my son Stephen had died. That was my 55th birthday.

Between the loss of my son, my daughter being in the hospital, and her baby being born 9 weeks early. It was a lot. While we were at the hospital, the Mayor's team, MONSE, reached out to me. They were such a comfort. I didn't even know them. But they supported us. They found a safe place for my daughter to live before she was even released from the hospital.

Without the Mayor, I wouldn't have had a funeral for Stephen. It was so meaningful because I didn't have to reach out to these people to ask for support. They reached out to me. They showed up for me when I needed it most and I'm forever grateful because while I did lose my son Stephen, I still have my daughter Destiny and my now 5-month-old grandson Dylan.

Mayor Scott:

The Phillips family — Ms. Patricia, Destiny, and baby Dylan — are some of the strongest people I have ever met.

I am so grateful that our MONSE team has been able to support them,

Not just right after this happened, but every day since.

When we talk about ending this crisis —

We're talking about preventing other families from experiencing what so many have experienced for so long.

We're talking about trauma informed, community led solutions, backed by data and experience.

Solutions that get at the root of violence in our neighborhoods.

Solutions that hold gun companies, gun traffickers, and gun offenders accountable.

Solutions that bring together community members, police officers and trusted voices to intervene in conflicts.

Solutions that offer folks a chance to change their lives and choose a better path,

But will hold them accountable if they continue to harm others.

These smart on crime solutions have reduced homicides and nonfatal shootings in Baltimore by 60% in the last five years.

No National Guard zero tolerance needed.

Just a comprehensive plan by Baltimore for Baltimore.

After years and years of 300-plus homicides, there were 133 in 2025 — the lowest number in 50 years.

That progress is despite cuts at the federal level,

Despite coordinated misinformation efforts,

And despite continued attacks on frontline CVI workers.

These are people intervening in conflicts — putting their safety at risk — to prevent violence.

Anyone who questions their work simply does not understand it,

And would never have the guts to do what they do, each and every day, to keep us safe.

We have the right people and strategies in place. It's on us to keep pushing forward.



We cannot be satisfied with better, when the best is within reach.

So — this summer, we will release our second five-year comprehensive violence prevention plan.

Like last time, we aren't just planning for one or two or three years.

We're planning for five years — because we have to think long term when we design these strategies.

I say “we” because this is Baltimore's plan.

Not Brandon Scott's plan — Baltimore's plan.

Just like the last one, it will be shaped by community members.

It will expand the scope of our work,

Leaning in further on issues like gun trafficking, youth engagement, reentry programs, and behavioral health.

It will address rising areas of concern for residents — like smoke shops.

Most importantly, it will help us sustain the progress we are seeing in our communities,

Thanks to the leadership of individuals like Colonel Velte.

Colonel Robert Velte:

My name is Colonel Robert Velte. I serve as Chief of the Crime Strategies and Intelligence Division of the Baltimore Police Department, which oversees the Department's work under the Group Violence Reduction Strategy — or simply GVRS.

This strategy focuses on the very small percentage of people who are most likely to be the victim or perpetrator of violence, and delivers identification, intervention, and — where necessary — accountability. Since 2022, we have identified over 1,000 of these high-risk individuals.

These individuals are engaged by outreach teams from BPD, MONSE, community organizations, and service providers, who offer a pathway out of a lifestyle that is conducive to violence. To date, we have offered services to over 800 people. Of those who chose to accept our help, over 95 percent have not been revictimized by a crime of violence.

For those who ignore our message, and continue to engage in criminal activity, the strategy shifts to focused enforcement, to ensure accountability and prevent continued involvement in violence. To date, GVRS has been connected to over 620 arrests. This is an entirely different approach to policing.

Residents feel the impact, as their neighborhoods are safer. And our officers feel the impact on the job, as they have more time to be proactive and strengthen relationships with those they serve. We see the results. GVRS has helped BPD and our partners achieve historic reductions in homicides and nonfatal shootings that few thought was possible.

Mayor Scott:

The work of Colonel Velte's unit who are here tonight — and all of our investments under the CVPP — are about establishing a new normal for Baltimore.

One where our city is no longer tied to the image of TV shows.

But one where we are the shining example of how a community can solve its problems.

Where every parent can let their child play outside without fear,



And where every Baltimorean grows into the best version of themselves.

I know that we can get there.

Because this progress goes beyond the walls of City government.

It's a shift in the culture. And as my girl Dee said the culture is shifting.

We're bringing that same attitude to other big challenges,

Including our work to end the opioid epidemic.

I often say that there is not a single Baltimorean who has not been affected by this crisis.

I vividly remember being a kid and giving my coat and Sega Genesis games to my friend,

Because his mother was struggling with substance use to the point where she sold his toys and new clothes on Christmas Eve.

That kind of stuff changes you.

It makes this personal — for all of us.

It also means that we have what we need right here in our city to end this crisis.

Nobody knows Baltimore better than Baltimoreans.

Thanks to the work of our Law Department and City Solicitor Thompson,

We've secured nearly \$600 million in settlements and awards from Big Pharma that fueled this crisis.

Members of our Restitution Advisory Board have brought their lived experience to the table,

Helping us put those dollars to good use.

Individuals like Charles McCleary, who — as a member of the Board — is helping to shape our response to the opioid crisis.

Charles McCleary:

Good evening. My name is Charles McCleary and I am a lifelong resident of this great city. I grew up not far from here in the Johnston Square community where I experienced the opioid crisis in our city firsthand. I survived the heroin epidemic and the fentanyl epidemic, whereas, my younger brother and many of our friends did not. It is with great honor that I serve on the Restitution Advisory Board in their memory.

I and nineteen other residents from various walks of life, have committed our time and energy to help our city end this crisis for good, by supporting organizations that have been doing this work in our communities for years. I want to commend you, Mr. Mayor, for not only giving us a seat at a table, but to be legitimate stakeholders in this process. Thank you.

Mayor Scott:

Thanks to the leadership of Charles and the entire RAB,

We're investing in resources like:

Mobile treatment services,

Narcan, drug-checking, and syringe service programs,



As well as housing, transportation, food assistance, education, and employment,
And a new public information campaign — Uplift Baltimore — which we will roll out later this month.
Together, we are working toward a new, significant goal:

To cut the number of overdose deaths in Baltimore by 50% by 2040.

We know that reaching this goal is much more complicated than simply removing drugs from our communities.
We have to get at the root of so many issues that contribute to substance use,
Including mental health, homelessness, and most notably: poverty.

But in Baltimore, we don't shy away from a challenge.

So we're investing in mental health resources across the city,
Investing in modern shelter models that have successfully transitioned 57% of clients to permanent housing,
And expanding services for homeless residents dealing with substance use disorder,
Including through a new partnership with Bloomberg Philanthropies, Vital Strategies, and the World Health Organization.

We know that tackling all of these challenges depends on getting the fundamentals right.

We take that approach to everything we do — from public safety to trash pickup to road paving.

And on that note:

Tonight, I am officially announcing Repave Baltimore — an entirely new approach to how we resurface our roads.

Listen, I know this is a point of frustration for everybody in Baltimore.

And I do mean everybody — including my mama, my father, my wife and all 5,011 of my cousins.

Yes during the Great Recession, the State cut our funding to the tune of 900 million and never put it back.

I don't control the State budget —

But while we continue to work with our State partners to maintain the funding we have,

There are steps we can and will take to improve our resurfacing program.

Repave will be a complete reimagining of our resurfacing program — from top to bottom.

Everything will change, from how we do our contracts so we have more contractors doing the work,

To analysis of our in-house crews' work,

To make sure they have what they need to be successful,

Including an accurate account of the condition of every street in the city.

We will make the entire process more transparent through the Repave website,

Which will allow you to track DOT's current and future work



And they'll be starting strong — because tonight, I'm challenging City agencies to a 90-day sprint:

DOT will pave 25 lane miles of road and fill 25,000 potholes.

Rec and Parks will clean, weed, and mulch 500 tree pits.

DPW will sweep 25,000 miles of road,

And complete 6,000 graffiti removals and 12,000 bulk waste pickups.

All in 90 days — starting mid-April.

The City is putting more crews on the street,

And they'll be working hard to deliver for all of us.

So if you see them in your neighborhood — thank them for their service.

I want to give a shoutout to our DPW and Clean Corps crews,

Who are here tonight, and will play a key role in this effort.

These teams have already completed tens of thousands of cleanup projects,

From vacant lot maintenance to alley and street cleaning.

Tonight, I'm proud to announce that — despite ARPA funding expiring — we are continuing Clean Corps into the future,

Which is especially good news as we prepare for our second annual Charm City Cleanup,

With projects in every neighborhood.

Investments like these are about showing up for our communities.

In addition to making our communities physically safer and healthier,

We're making sure our city is safe and welcoming for all of our residents.

I meant it when I said we're building a Baltimore that's for everybody.

If you follow the law, you are welcome here.

No matter where you were born,

No matter what language you speak.

Our immigrant neighbors are under attack from this federal administration,

My Office of Immigrant Affairs has conducted direct outreach to businesses and community members,

Shared Know Your Rights information,

And provided legal and social services through programs like Safe City,

A network of 8 non-profits — including Just Neighbors — who help residents navigate immigration proceedings.

Sarah Selim Milad:

Good evening. My name is Sarah Selim Milad, and I am a managing attorney with Just Neighbors, a nonprofit



immigration legal service provider that is part of the Safe City Baltimore program. As Coptic Orthodox Christian immigrant, I resonate with the plight of asylees and refugees fleeing persecution. I admire the courage and resilience of immigrants and refugees in our city. And I am honored to stand with them in what has become an increasingly difficult journey.

On behalf of Just Neighbors, I want to thank Mayor Scott and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs for funding and leading Safe City. This program is bold and innovative and has provided a renewed sense of hope for so many Baltimore residents. Tonight, I want to share a message from one impacted resident.

“La ayuda de este programa vino en un momento cuando no sabíamos cómo íbamos a conseguir abogado para nuestro caso. Nuestra familia ya ha sido impactada por las redadas y deportación. Con tantos años que hemos litigado nuestro caso, nunca hemos tenido un abogado hasta ahora que nos apoye como lo ha hecho nuestra abogada de Ciudad Segura. Hay muchas personas en Baltimore quien necesita este servicio y espero que continúe.”

“The assistance from this program came at a moment when we didn't know how we were going to get an attorney for our case. Our family has already been impacted by the raids and deportations. We've been litigating our case for many years, and we've never had an attorney support us in our journey the way our Safe City lawyer has. There are many people in Baltimore who need this service, and I hope it continues.”

Mayor Scott:

I want to thank Sarah and all of our Safe City partners for their work.

This federal administration wants us to believe that the only way to create public safety is through lawlessness:

Violating Constitutional rights,

Attacking peaceful protestors,

And targeting Black and brown communities in particular, regardless of their immigration status.

But Baltimore proves that theory wrong every day.

We prove that our diversity is our strength.

We prove that only through collective action and comprehensive violence intervention can you truly make a city safer.

I often say that Baltimore's Renaissance is here — and we want everybody to feel the benefits of that rise.

Because make no mistake — Baltimore is rising.

Everywhere you look in our city, there are exciting projects underway —

From all of those vacant housing renovations,

To Harborplace,

To the Key Bridge rebuild,

And so much more.

We're making sure that those projects create opportunities for local businesses and local workers,

Especially union workers — like Kenyona.



Kenyona Whitaker:

My name is Kenya Whitaker and I am a 1st year apprentice in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers from Baltimore’s very own Local 24. I stand before you today to show you all just how quickly your life can change because of the opportunities available in our city.

This time last year, I was working a minimum wage job with no opportunity for advancement. Crying in the middle of the night because I needed more money but didn’t know where it was going to come from. So I decided to reach out to the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development. They helped me enroll in a pre-apprenticeship class called Raising The Bar and this program — provided by the Baltimore DC Building Trade Council — matched me with a union electrical apprenticeship.

Fast forward to today, I am now finishing the first year of my apprenticeship with one of the biggest electrical contractors on the east coast. I’m equipped with a solid foundation for a career, guaranteed yearly raises, health insurance, all alongside the industry’s finest training. I’m not just learning to be a construction worker, I’m learning to be a skilled craftsman. My journeymen aren’t just my coworkers, they’re my comrades. Mentors. My inspiration to keep going when my feet ache on the ladder and when my body reaches its limit of exhaustion.

Every day, I get to look at the world around me and feel proud that as an apprentice for the IBEW, I put those receptacles in the Amazon Warehouse that delivers your packages. I pulled the wire to power the Nestle factory that makes the ice cream at your grocery store. Would you even believe that my very first job site was at the hospital I was born in just 25 years ago. I’m living the life I prayed for.

Mayor Scott:

This year, I was proud to sign the City of Baltimore’s first-ever project labor agreement with the building trades, Creating jobs for skilled workers like Kenya on key city projects.

As someone who comes from a proud union family, this is personal for me.

My mom’s parents moved to Baltimore from Virginia with \$300 to their name.

My grandfather — or “pop pop” as we call him,

Told me he was down to his last \$100, and about to return to Virginia,

When he ended up with a union job at General Motors.

That job bought the house my mom grew up in.

I grew up there, and it’s where my parents met.

Think about it. I was that close to not existing.

Crazy to know that someone getting a job can change so much for so many people.

My family is living proof that a path to a good, stable career is life changing.

I want every Baltimorean to have that path available to them.

That’s why we increased pay for City workers — which now start at \$20 an hour.

That’s why we opened the Fleet Academy in Park Heights,

Which offers on-the-job training, and helps apprentices find careers working for City government.

It’s why we’ve hosted resource fairs to help federal workers transition to jobs in City government,



After Trump illegally fired them.

It's why we're making sure our young people know all of the options available to them,

From apprenticeships, to internships, to colleges, and so much more.

And it's why I am personally so passionate about programs like YouthWorks,

Which connect students with career opportunities across the City.

I'm proud to say that the budget I am releasing tomorrow includes more than \$16 million to support YouthWorks.

We aren't only supporting young people while they're in school,

We're working to connect them with jobs before and after they graduate.

Ideally jobs working for us!

We have initiatives across city government that help with this,

Like our HBCU fellowship program — thanks to our partners at Baltimore Corps,

And apprenticeships with various City agencies.

But it can be difficult for our young people to navigate all of those opportunities.

Which is why I'm proud to announce the Baltimore City Joint Apprenticeship Program,

With support from our friends at Annie E. Casey.

This program will bring all of these apprenticeships under our HR Department.

For a long time, young people in Baltimore haven't had the tools and resources they need to reach their full potential.

When I was growing up, I was seen as a problem to be solved.

A number.

Today, we see things differently.

Our young people are our greatest resource — and we must invest in them in every way.

We are being intentional about doing just that —

Starting from child care and pre-K.

With that in mind, I am proud to announce that my budget for next year includes additional funding to strengthen child care providers in the city.

We're supporting small business owners —

Helping them deliver 500 more child care seats.

And we aren't stopping at pre-K.

We've opened 13 new schools since I took office, with 3 more on the way,

We've opened 6 new rec centers with 5 more set to open over the next year.



But even with all these investments — there is still something missing.

Baltimore is home to the best youth athletes in the country.

Basketball players, volleyball players and runners.

But they never get to host big tournaments or meets.

They either have to travel, or compete at old, rundown facilities.

I know this personally,

And have the scars and bad hip to prove it.

Tonight, I am proud to announce that those days will soon be over.

By the end of my term,

We will break ground on a new, state of the art sports facility here in Baltimore, that features:

A competition-level indoor track,

And basketball and volleyball courts to host tournaments.

My budget puts forth the first \$20 million for this facility,

I am calling on partners to join us in delivering this for our community.

Projects like this one send a clear message to our young people:

They are worth investing in.

That's an especially important message for young men like Da'Wan.

Da'Wan R.:

I'm Da'Wan and I'm a G-V-R-S participant with Roca. I was outside. I'd been running the streets since the 8th grade, not listening to my mother. I didn't want to change.

Then last year, my friend Ty was shot and killed. I went to the vigil and every time I looked at his mother, I saw the pain she was going through, and I never wanted my mother to experience that. So when Roca knocked on my door, and asked if I needed help, I said yes.

Three months in, I got a job. I go to school every day now. I'm gonna graduate in August. My mentor Ross is like my big brother and inspired me to do work in the community to help someone like myself. With his support, and the people around me pushing me, I know I'm on the right path.

Shoutout to my mom for never giving up on me, even when I wasn't listening. Shoutout to Ross for believing in me and showing me my worth. And shoutout to myself, because I made the decision to change. I know where I'm going. I'm planning my future. I know my worth. That's what really matters.

Mayor Scott:

Our young people — Da'Wan and his generation — are the future of our city.

I want them to know that the sky is the limit for them.

And I want them to hear that directly from me,



Because I know firsthand that that could change their life.

I think back to meeting Kurt Schmoke — who made it possible for a young Black boy from Park Heights to even dream of becoming mayor.

I think of my Congressman, Kweisi Mfume, who literally gave me my voice, and the fearlessness to walk into my purpose.

And I think of Congressman Cummings, whose memory reminds me every day that no matter what, I will always be Brandon from Park Heights.

In this moment, in this job, every day is an opportunity —

To go further and do better than the day before.

Neighborhood by neighborhood, block by block,

It's a chance to improve the lives of the residents of this city:

Those living now, and those who will be born in the years to come.

For those of you here — and watching at home — I know sometimes it's hard to keep track of all the work we're doing.

But I want you to be able to see the investments we're making in your neighborhood.

So we made a map.

Plug in your neighborhood,

And you'll see what we've already done — and what we're working on now — near you.

In Johnston Square, Mr. Charles and Ms. Regina will see investments like the Hammond and free public wifi.

Yolanda will see the Fleet Academy training facility and the Park Heights Library.

Kourtnee will see signal retiming projects and sidewalk repairs.

Ms. Patricia will see upgrades to the Northern CAP Center and a new HVAC system at the Govans Library Branch.

Kenyona will see the new playground at Indiana Ave Park.

Da'Wan will see a Tech Hub at his local senior center and Naloxone boxes at his metro stop.

This map is a visual representation of our commitment to investing in every neighborhood,

And improving the lives of every resident.

Because there is no Baltimore without Baltimoreans.

When we talk about the "State of the City,"

We have to talk about so much more than what goes on at City Hall.

We have to talk about:

Da'Wan getting on track to graduate,

Ms. Regina and Yolanda shaping the future of the communities that they were raised in,



Kourtnee helping young people buy a home,

Sarah and her team supporting immigrant families,

Kenyona literally building a stronger city,

And Ms. Patricia's grandson Dylan — the miracle baby — turning 5 months old.

This is the greatest city in America because Baltimoreans are the greatest people on Earth.

Baltimore's potential is the potential of each and every person that calls her home.

And the future of Charm's City — your city, my city, our city — is one we're building together.

Thank you.