

Inaugural Speech 2021

Franklin - A Tale of Two Cities

Happy New Year everyone, welcome to 2021. Where did 2020 go? I'm sure many of us are glad to see it in the rearview mirror-but still, man did time fly! Like many of you, Christmas snuck right up on me and I often find myself earning to get into the Christmas spirit. So, on Christmas eve I watched Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer and A Christmas Carol with Allister Simms (he's my favorite Scrooge). Nothing like Charles Dickens to get you in the Spirit. But 2020 can best be described by a phrase from another Dickens classic, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" in his Tale of Two Cities.

The best of times? 2020? For the past several months I've been hearing about record stock market closes. The markets' have never been higher. Let's celebrate because Wall Street is cooking with gas! But these are clearly "the worst of times". We're still living in a pandemic era. Since this awful virus struck there have been 20.5M confirmed cases in the United States alone. Over 350,000 deaths reported from this disease and we're entering our 3rd phase of infections. To help slow the spread, we've had to take extraordinary measures including isolating ourselves from our friends our families from each other. Depression is at an all-time high and expectations for a brighter future are at an all-time low. "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times."

When things seem like they just keep going from bad to worse, what's worked for me is to say, "that's it, enough, it stops now." Then set my thoughts and actions on positive things. Let this be our moment to brush ourselves off of 2020 and looking forward to 2021. Let's remember, that even though 2020 gave us great challenges, we accomplished incredible things.

- We received permits to create our Whitewater Park. A huge accomplishment and first of its kind in all New England. This will change everything!
- Moving forward with Mill City Park to further compliment the Whitewater park.
- Peabody Home will have its largest expansion in its history.
- The JP Stevens Mill project received final approval and will mark the largest single investment in our downtown's history.
- We finally completed a very complex deal clearing the way for Cumberland Farms to build one of their largest stores in all New England.
- Investments in our Central Street properties continue.
- Major investments in properties throughout the City continue.
- Franklin properties are selling in 5 days and for above asking price.
- People are moving here from all across the country and when you can attract people from Massachusetts and Texas, well we must be doing something right!

This year we'll start to see the fruits of all our 2020 labor start to take shape. Let's enjoy it, let's revel in it, and let's be prepared to keep our foot on the gas because as the old adage goes, "success breeds success" and many more great things are headed our way! City Council, School Board members, fellow citizens let's work together to keep this success rolling!

Stay healthy, stay strong, and God willing, we will all be together again in 2021. God Bless all of you and God Bless the City of Franklin.”

Tony Giunta
Mayor - City of Franklin
January 6, 2020