

DEPUTY MAYOR ADAMS: Good morning. I almost feel like my comments should really take place at the end of the program because I'm going to sort of talk about the future of Detroit. I think it's also important that we recognize that 1967 was a seminal date in the history of the city of Detroit. That was not when the population declined and the city of Detroit began.

Those who are familiar with the history of the city of Detroit recognize that in 1920 the city of Detroit had a population of about 300,000 people. From 1920 to 1950, the city of Detroit experienced the greatest growth probably of any city in America. It went from around 300,000 people to roughly 1.8 million people. In 1950, as we know, there were a lot of changes in federal policy and federal highway policy.

There was one very important decision that was made in the city of Detroit by Mayor Cobo, who decided to extend the water lines outside of the city limits, which led to rapid suburbanization and growth of the city of Detroit.

So from 1950 to 1967, the population of the city dropped from 1.8 million people to 1.4 million people. From 1967 there was a precipitous drop. From 1967 we went from 1.4 million people -- realistically in 1972 -- to 1.2 million people. 1.2 million people in 1972. It dropped in 2007 to 914,000 people.

Now, while those drops were precipitous, they were not caused by what happened in the city. While the insurrection was a very critical point, because it led to the depopulation of white folks out of the city of Detroit, African-Americans still remained in the city of Detroit.

It's probably what most people feel as the blackest major city in urban America.

What has occurred over the last five years has been nothing short of phenomenal. We took a city that was on the brink of financial disaster and was running deficits probably in the range of \$150 million a year. We have turned those deficits around -- perhaps if we're lucky, we'll actually end up with a positive balance, which is quite remarkable when you look at the state budget.

Representative Cushingberry can comment on that. To have a positive balance in this economy is nothing short of phenomenal. It's all about transformation of the economy going from a muscled economy to an information technology economy.

The city of Detroit, over the last three years has actually led the region in housing starts.

We've had more positive economic growth and development in the city over the last five years than we've had over the last 20 years.

The Quicken announcement is nothing short of phenomenal because it recognizes the need to have a strong central urban core, the need to continue to attract diversity in our economy, and the need to continue to attract young people into our economy.

We face three critical tasks that we have ahead of us: One is the confrontation of our education system. The Detroit Public Schools in 1980 had a population of 285,000 students. Today that population is less than 100,000 students. And when you account for students that are in charter schools, which maybe numbers around 60,000 people, the reality is that we're losing far too many students in the educational process.

The ninth-grade dropout rate is probably the greatest indicator of what your crime rate will be. And we will continue to look at our ninth-grade dropout rate. It continues to be tremendously high.

We've got to do something about that.

Transforming our workforce development programs. We've taken a very aggressive tack. We have to match people with where the jobs are. We had a workforce development process that was flawed. It has been corrected. What we are doing now is we are taking our job training dollars and directing those dollars where we know we have jobs.

So in health care technology, information technology, construction trades. We are transforming our educational and our workforce development dollars so that we make sure that our people have jobs and the dollars are where the jobs are because we cannot have people that are gainfully employed in our economy if we don't put those people where the jobs are.

Finally, the battle of crime. I can sit up here and read statistics ad nauseam, which say that our crime rate is down. But most of our citizens will never believe that because it's the individualized nature of the crime versus the collective nature of collective criminal data.

We've got a major challenge ahead of us with the state population being repositioned. Our prison re-entry programs with the state is basically closing prisons to save money. We've got a major challenge ahead of us in terms of making sure that our young men and women that come back home are gainfully employed. And we are working very aggressively in the prisoner re-entry area so that we can make sure that those young people do not go back to a life of crime.

Racism is still very, very heavy in this area. Make no mistake about it. It was actually amazing to look at the Quicken announcement. For many years, when jobs were going outside the city of Detroit and corporations were being lured away by special tax benefits, now, all of a sudden this program benefits the city of Detroit. Now everybody wants to talk about the inequity of the city of Livonia losing these jobs.

Well, what we say to you, this was probably the first time in the history of any economic development program, that the city of Detroit actually had a major positive benefit from it, and we cannot let the discussions of race cloud the economic issues facing the state.

The reality is that the city of Detroit will not turn around unless the state economy turns around. There has to be tremendous changes in state taxation policies related to business growth and development. If we cannot attract businesses in the state of Michigan, clearly we will not be in the position to attract businesses in the city of Detroit.

So we've got to be clearly focused on what we have to do in order to change these things because it's very important to us to make sure that we do not have a society -- one white, one brown, one white, unequal. We have a unique advantage here in that we, as African-Americans, control our own political destiny. We have no one else to look at but ourselves. All the tools that we need are within our own reach and within our grasp. We have to continue to work towards finding solutions for our problems.

We have to continue to be open and outreaching in our efforts to make sure that change occurs. We have to be completely honest with ourselves in recognizing where we have problems, where we have issues, where we have concerns.

So, on behalf of our mayor, we certainly want to thank the Eisenhower folks for coming to Detroit. Detroit is truly one of the major cities in America. We have to recognize that we have a lot of things that people would love to have. We have the infrastructure designed for two million people. We have fresh water, which, if we were in Georgia, we would be lusting after. We have a lot of great things in our town. We have great people, with great resolution, with great history. The panel of folks here today represents a tremendous cross-section of people that have been involved in the liberation struggle in this city for a long, long time. So we have to continue to work together. We have to continue to look at the information.

Two final points: One, there was a very interesting study that was done by the Social Compact Group, which really analyzed the economic state of affairs here in the city of Detroit. The information in this report led to actually the Census Bureau changing their population count here in the city of Detroit, which recognized that the rate of decline in our population was not as precipitous as they would want us to believe.

And so I would ask that -- I will leave these documents and provide them with the Eisenhower folks because I think they paint a very positive picture of the economic history of the city of Detroit, the actual purchasing power, the recognition that our \$4.7 billion, with the purchasing power that's here in the city of Detroit, we're losing more than half of our purchasing power because we are severely "under-retailed" here. If we can attract those retailers in the city of Detroit, we can then provide jobs for our young people, which would provide them with a positive opportunity in life: Entrepreneurship, job training, education, neighborhood policing, and having people involved.

The no-snitch policy is crazy in our community. When crimes are committed in our community, people have to speak up and speak out. So I would leave this document with the commission. I'd also like to leave another document from the Census Bureau, which recognizes the fact that they had severely undercounted a lot of people here in the city of Detroit. So we are not as bad as most people would want to believe. We have a long

way to go. We recognize what our issues are, but we are here to work with you because you are a part of our community.

Thank you very much.