*Good morning, everyone.*

Thank you to President **Lee Pelton** and Emerson College for hosting us. Vice President **[Joseph] Biden**, thank you for your kind words, for your service to our country, and for your example of compassionate leadership and uncommon strength at a time when we surely need it.

To my family: I love you.

Governor **[Charles]** **Baker**, Speaker **[Robert]** **DeLeo**, Senator **[Edward]** **Markey**, Congressmen **[Michael] Capuano** and **[Stephen]** **Lynch**, Ambassador **[Raymond] Flynn**, and all elected and appointed officials: good morning and thank you for being here.

To the members of the Boston City Council, especially Councilors **Lydia Edwards**, **Kim Janey**, and **Edward Flynn**: welcome, and congratulations to you and your families. I look forward to working with all of you on Boston's future.

To the first responders who worked late last night to keep us safe, as they do every night and every day, and to all of our city workers, we thank you.

And to the people of Boston: the women and men, children and seniors; the workers in every industry; the small business owners in every neighborhood; the artists and the activists; the clergy and the social workers; the teachers and the students; and the veterans who protect us and make us proud: I wish each of you and your families a happy, healthy New Year.

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*Since 1630, Boston has been a refuge: from religious persecution, from hunger and war and discrimination, and now, also, from climate change.*

From the first immigrant who set foot on Shawmut Peninsula to the first student from Puerto Rico who stepped into a new classroom this fall, for nearly four centuries Boston has been more than the place we share. It’s the hope we bring. It’s the determination we show. It’s the idea that Boston and America were built on: that, if we listen for the truth, if we learn from our past, if we lead in a spirit of service, then each generation can do better than the last—in fairness and in goodness, as well as in health and prosperity—and we can be a power of example to our nation and the world.

In the last four years, we have dedicated ourselves, together, to Boston’s progress. In the city where free public education began, we expanded its reach from pre-kindergarten to community college. We tackled a housing shortage by building record numbers of new homes and new affordable homes. We showed a way forward in police-community relations—major crime has fallen by 19%, and arrests are down 23%. We proved that Boston’s values create value: adding 80,000 new jobs, lifting small businesses in every neighborhood, and becoming a headquarters city in the global economy.

With the revenues from our growth, and by modernizing city government, we upgraded the schools, parks, libraries, and community centers that our neighborhoods cherish. And at a time when the national conversation too often turned mean, we recommitted, without reservation, to feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, confronting racism, and welcoming the immigrant. And we always will.

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*We are a proud city. But like good Bostonians, we are not satisfied with the progress of yesterday.*

We know there is much more work to be done. In 12 short years, Boston will turn 400. Whatever I’m doing in 2030, I want us to know that we did everything we could to make Boston better and make Boston stronger. That’s why we worked together on so much planning in the last four years, and why we called it *Imagine Boston 2030*. We want to finish Boston’s fourth century stronger and more united than ever.

To take our city to new heights, we must adapt the idea of Boston to new challenges, from the local streets to the global stage. We can be a city whose industry and innovation make the world a better place *and* provide good jobs in every neighborhood of Boston. We can be a city that heals the environment by opening our waterfront for all to enjoy. We can be the global capital of learning whose own young people know that they can change the world. In other words, we can be a city that’s world-class—because it works for the middle class.

That’s what made the idea of Boston a reality for most of us. My parents came here as immigrants, with next to nothing. My father got work helping to build Boston’s growing skyline. He and my mother were able to make a home, and raise their kids to dream even bigger dreams. That’s the kind of progress a strong middle class provides: not just security for those who are already comfortable, but opportunity for all who need it.

My greatest concern for our city’s future is that we could lose this engine of upward mobility. Nationwide, fewer than half the workers born in the 1980s are earning as much as their parents did. Something has gone wrong. It’s not just globalization and technology. We’ve faced upheavals before, like Depression and war, and we’ve come out stronger. Today, instead of coming together to defend our common welfare, we are divided and our middle class is under attack.

Progress on health care is getting rolled back. Taxes are shifting from the wealthy onto the backs of working people. And there’s talk of cutting Social Security and Medicare for our seniors. We see attacks on workers’ rights and attacks on the women and immigrants and people of color who make up the majority of our working class. These are efforts to break up and tear down the middle class that built America’s prosperity and is building Boston’s future. That’s why we have stood up to fight back, and we must keep fighting back.

But, just as important, we have to show a better way forward. So in my second term, I will prioritize the fundamentals of middle-class opportunity in our world-class city: strong 21st-century schools; good jobs; and affordable homes in safe neighborhoods. A better Boston for everyone.

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*It begins with a guarantee that every child, whatever their starting point, gets the education they need to thrive. This is a promise we must keep together as a community, by listening to, and working with, families, teachers, and principals.*

That’s how we are revitalizing Boston’s aging school infrastructure through BuildBPS, our $1 billion facilities program. Our progress so far shows the range of diverse communities, student needs, and 21st-century skills that new buildings unlock.

* We started with a brand-new Dearborn STEM Academy in Roxbury, Boston’s first new high school in 23 years.
* Next up is a state-of-the-art new school for Boston Arts Academy in the Fenway.
* We are moving forward with a new building for the international Quincy Upper School in Chinatown.
* And we are going to rebuild the Carter School in the South End, serving students with the most profound special needs. Our plan is to triple the capacity and install a therapeutic pool for this compassionate gem of a school community.

Just as important as new buildings are the renovations at the David Ellis School in Roxbury, the McKay School in East Boston, Channing Elementary in Hyde Park, the Condon School in South Boston, the Curley in Jamaica Plain, and many more.

In the next 4 years, we’re going to continue BuildBPS by working with school communities toward simpler grade configurations that work better for everyone.

We’re also going to scale up our new food pilot program that’s working at East Boston High School, the Kennedy School, the Bradley School, and East Boston Early Education Center, until every student gets at least two fresh, nutritious meals, every day, all across the district.

As we modernize infrastructure, we’ll continue to strengthen academic pathways through every grade. But turning education into opportunity goes beyond school walls. Our young people need and deserve access to the global network of higher learning that flows through their own city. So we’ll be calling on Boston’s world-renowned colleges and universities to play a bigger role.

In 2016, 710 Boston residents were attending private colleges in our city, on scholarships worth roughly $32 million. That’s a 14% increase from four years earlier. I want to thank all these institutions and, in particular, Boston University, for enrolling 80 new BPS graduates this year alone.

But I also ask our colleges and universities, as good citizens, to do more. Come into more of our schools. Admit more of our graduates. And, by next year, I challenge you as a community to add 100 new full scholarships for Boston students.

Finally, when leadership from the White House is lacking, our partnership with the State House is more important than ever. Nowhere has that partnership had more of an impact than in our classrooms. But our success was built on a two-part agreement: accountability and funding. And while student outcomes have kept improving, funding shortfalls are undermining our ability to go further.

So we will continue to advocate for fully funding the charter school reimbursements called for by state law. And we will keep working with the Legislature on our plan to fund universal pre-kindergarten with tourism taxes that are already being collected in Boston.

Education has evolved. It’s time for our partnership to evolve as well. Let’s all pull together, to move our students, our city, and our state forward.

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*We need every pathway to lead to real opportunity. That means good jobs that sustain families and strengthen our middle class.*

Four years ago, we created an Economic Development cabinet to unify and strengthen our job-creating policies. This team has expanded small business support in every neighborhood, recruited industry leaders around the world to bring new jobs to our city, and moved Bostonians up into those middle-class careers.

Our Office of Workforce Development has trained nearly 3,000 Bostonians for good jobs with living wages. It’s empowering thousands more with credit and wealth-building tools. And now we’re building a program called *City Academy* to train and place Boston Public School graduates in good city jobs.

In the next four years we will go further, with a campaign called

*Boston Hires*. We will work with nonprofit partners and private employers toward a new goal: 20,000 low-income Boston residents trained and placed in good jobs by the year 2022.

I invite all our city’s employers to join this movement and take advantage of the tremendous untapped talent in our neighborhoods.

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*A strong education and a good job are the foundation. But housing is the key to long-term financial security.*

Four years ago, we took on the historic housing shortage that has been driving up costs and driving down savings for too many families. We set a target of creating 53,000 new homes by 2030. By improving the development and permitting process, increasing affordable housing production, and expanding homebuyer supports, we got ahead of pace to meet that goal. And rents have stabilized.

Last year alone, we set new records, with over 5,000 new homes—and more than 1,000 restricted to low- and moderate-income families.

But with our city’s population growing even faster and a regional housing shortage adding pressure, too many families are still being priced out of too many neighborhoods. We are determined to meet this challenge by redoubling our efforts.

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*Recently I stood with mayors from across Greater Boston to commit to a regional housing plan. By March, we will announce the number of new homes the region needs.*

As a leader in this strategy, we will increase our city’s targets for low-income homes, moderate-income homes, senior housing, and overall units.

We will meet these goals by following your vision in Imagine Boston 2030: transit-oriented development, mixed-income growth in new neighborhoods, and protecting and enhancing our existing communities. We will draw on new resources for affordable housing from the Community Preservation Act which you supported. To serve those in the greatest need, we will invest in public housing like never before. And as college enrollment increases, we will insist on new dorms that leave more neighborhood homes open to working families.

With new targets driving us forward, a regional plan promising help from our neighbors, and the Legislature working on a housing bond bill, we recommit to making affordable homes a reality for a strong middle class.

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*Every single person deserves security, dignity, and hope. Those suffering from addiction, and those experiencing homelessness, are no less deserving than anyone of a place in our middle-class community.*

In 2014, for the safety of our most vulnerable residents, we were forced to close the Long Island Bridge. At the same time, we opened a door to long-overdue reforms in how Boston provides human services for our region.

I want to make one thing clear: the opioid crisis and homelessness are not the same. They each require a unique, comprehensive response.

That’s why we created an Office of Recovery Services to expand access to treatment. Recovery requires a continuum of care—from detox, to residential treatment, to transitional housing—to reclaim your life.

For many people, including myself, Long Island played a vital role in Boston’s recovery landscape. And it will again.

Today I pledge to you that we will rebuild the bridge. And we will create, on Long Island, the comprehensive, long-term recovery campus that our city and state need more than ever, to tackle the opioid crisis.

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*The closing of Long Island also did something else. It finally brought homelessness out of the shadows.*

Instead of riding a bus out to a shelter, night after night, for months and years on end, people need a permanent home, with supports, as part of a community. They need housing first, and that’s the system we are moving toward. It’s how we’ve housed nearly 1,300 formerly homeless people. And it’s how we ended chronic veterans’ homelessness in the City of Boston.

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*But the need remains great. So today, we embark together on a citywide movement.*

We launch the [Boston’s Way Home Fund](https://www.boston.gov/news/2018-inauguration-speech-mayor-martin-j-walshhttps://www.boston.gov/news/mayor-walsh-announce-creation-bostons-way-home-fund). Our goal is to raise $10 million privately, to create 200 units of permanent, supportive housing over the next four years. Pine Street Inn will provide the know-how and Bank of America will start us off with a quarter-million dollar donation. I'd like to thank **Anne Finucane** and **Miceal Chamberlain** of Bank of America for your leadership. I invite every organization and individual to join us. And I ask everyone here, or watching at home, to visit *[www.bostonswayhomefund.org](http://www.bostonswayhomefund.org/)* and learn how you can help.

Boston built America’s first public school, public park, and public library. We dug the first subway and invented the first telephone. We ran the first annual marathon and won the first World Series. Now let’s be the first major city to come together as a community and *end* chronic homelessness for good.

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*From around the world and across our nation, people look to Boston for hope, for opportunity, and for a chance to build a better life.*

They make Boston their home. They become our middle class. They are us. And together we *live* the idea that is Boston, as the beating heart of a great city that is always moving forward.

Today we take another step forward together: mindful of our history as a city of purpose and progress; optimistic about our future; and determined to fulfill a vision that grows with each generation. We are more than “a city upon a hill, with the eyes of all people upon us.” We are a city built *by* all the peoples of the world, as they turn hunger into hope, crisis into recovery, and conflict into community.

Together we have built a city of neighborhoods that care, a city of second chances, a city of learning and healing, a city of courage and creativity, a city of heart and hope. We are one of the great cities of the world and, after nearly four centuries, our greatest days are yet to come.

Thank you.

God bless you.

God bless the City of Boston.