



Mayor Frank G. Jackson
March 6, 2006
The Fifty Club

Good evening.

I said last year that I'd be back. Well, I'm back. Thank you for inviting me to speak tonight.

In talking with you tonight, I want you to know that I view each of you as an investor in our city. You are the shareholders of our community and you have a real interest in what happens in our city. And I am here to have a dialogue with you about our city.

We need to work together to the best of our ability to make this city great again. We know longer can afford to just get by or to allow business as usual.

That is why – in my first two months as Mayor, as the CEO of this \$1.1 billion corporation – I've been working on getting back to basics – focusing on setting the groundwork so that everyone will know that we are open for business.

We are focusing on:

- Sound fiscal management
- Safety
- Education
- Building a regional economy
- Creating an environment that fosters job creation and retention and investment

We are currently in the process of finalizing our operating budget. We have worked to close a \$14 million deficit this year and are putting efficiencies in place to close that gap for next year.

- **3% reduction** in operations to provide more service with less money
- **Operations Efficiency Initiative** is underway
- Our **Division of Water** currently has a strong balance sheet and we intend to make sure that it stays strong.
- **Cleveland's airports** are a lifeline for commerce and our future.
- These assets are **economic development tools**

In my first 64 days, we have been very focused on **safety** – to improve the quality of life for our residents and so that our businesses can be successful.

The City of Cleveland is **partnering with the School District to improve discipline and security** in and around our schools because our children cannot be educated to compete in the marketplace of tomorrow if they don't have an environment in which they can learn.

During my State of the City Address, I outlined ways to create a strong **regional economy** and to **attract business from outside the region rather than stealing copies from each other**. I look forward to moving this agenda forward.

And, immediately following my election last November, I started working on ways to **follow through on economic development promises** that were made.

You, as investors in our City, need to know that **we are committed to development** – to projects in the pipeline and future projects. And we need to make sure that we make Cleveland a place where you choose to invest and where you choose to stay.

We need to make Cleveland a much **easier place to do business** through:

- **Investments,**
- **Research and development,**
- **Innovation and**
- **Technology.**

This starts with improving the **level of service** you receive when you interact with **City Hall**:

- We are revising our procurement practice to encourage greater participation **by local suppliers and smaller businesses.**
- I will be hiring a **Chief of Regional Economic Development** to take a proactive approach to development.

These are just some of the things we are doing and have underway and you've heard it all before. But the message tonight is this – we are **going back to basics** to make the City of Cleveland work and to let everyone know that **we are open for business.**

We are in the business of service delivery. **Our bottom line is service delivery and we intend to improve our bottom line.**

To do so, however, **we can no longer afford to be parochial** in our thoughts, actions, or outcomes.

That is why I'm interested in what you have to say – **your suggestions on what Cleveland needs to do in to create an investment environment** that will lead to economic development, job creation and quality of life. That is why I'm here and I look forward to your suggestions and questions.