

Redd on Camden: 'Beginning to see seeds grow'



Camden Mayor Dana Redd, speaking to the Courier-Post editorial board in 2014, delivered her State of the City address Wednesday. (Photo: File photo)

CAMDEN — Mayor Dana Redd said Wednesday the city is "progressing and rising to unprecedented levels of promise," but acknowledged there was still much work to do to make sure residents were not left behind as Camden welcomes new growth and development.

Delivering her State of the City address at the Cooper's Ferry Partnership annual meeting at Adventure Aquarium, Redd told city, county and state officials, business and civic leaders that Camden is "beginning to see our seeds grow" after her six years in office, time she said was spent getting the city's finances in order, emphasizing public safety through the creation of a county-run police force and breaking down silos within city government.

Still, she said, the city will "fall flat" if it fails to ensure its residents benefit from the millions of dollars in tax breaks and incentives that have spurred companies including Subaru, Holtec and the Philadelphia 76ers to relocate to the city, and the expansion of existing city institutions such as

Rutgers University-Camden and Cooper University Hospital.

"We must supply our residents with the tools to succeed," Redd told an audience that included former New Jersey Gov. Jim Florio, Camden County Freeholders Jeff Nash, Lou Cappelli Jr. and Bill Moen, city schools Superintendent Paymon Rouhanifard and Camden County Police Chief Scott Thomson.

Referencing the city's designation in April as a federal Promise Zone, Redd noted a combination of local and national initiatives would offer residents job training and "cradle to career" education that would enable them to compete for jobs at companies like Holtec, Cooper and Rutgers.

"Many of us in this room have been through the good times and the bad in Camden," said Redd, a Democrat and city native, "through many false starts and the broken promises.

"But now, is the time to stand proud, to stand as one, and to complete what we have started."

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