

City Manager Remarks

Kyle P. Lovell
City Manager, City of Oneida

March 03, 2026

Good evening Mayor and Members of the Common Council,

Over the past 60 days, our focus has remained clear and disciplined: protect the City's financial standing, execute critical infrastructure projects responsibly, strengthen internal controls, and ensure clarity in operational leadership.

I am pleased to report that the City's 2024 independent audit, conducted by Drescher & Malecki, has been completed. There were no material weaknesses and no major findings identified. That outcome reflects strengthened internal controls and steady fiscal oversight. The full audit report will be formally issued within approximately sixty days.

Our Annual Financial Report, or AFR, is currently being finalized in coordination with the Comptroller's Office to ensure full compliance and timely submission to New York State.

In March, the City is required to execute a bond issuance exceeding \$50 million related to the Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion. This action converts our existing short-term BAN financing into long-term debt. Failure to proceed would require immediate repayment of the BAN, which is not fiscally practical. This financing is not optional; it is responsible long-term capital management and protects the City's financial stability.

In recent weeks, we have renewed the Glenmore Dam BAN with \$1.44 million in new capital, structured a \$14 million BAN maturing in March 2027, and executed a \$1 million principal reduction prior to bonding. These actions reflect active and strategic financial leadership designed to position the City responsibly for the future.

The \$60 million Wastewater Treatment Plant modernization continues progressing as planned. We also addressed an emergency sewer lateral collapse on West Elm Street to restore service quickly and protect system integrity. Additionally, HVAC replacement planning is being advanced now to prevent a repeat of last summer's cooling issues in City Hall.

With the elimination of the Public Safety Commissioner role, operational authority for Police and Fire is now clearly aligned under the City Manager's Office, consistent with the Charter's structure. Oversight, discipline, administrative review, and fiscal control now

operate within a unified chain of command. Clarity in leadership reduces conflict and strengthens accountability.

As warmer weather approaches, I have directed proactive coordination with the Oneida Police Department regarding rail trail and seasonal enforcement strategies. We are preparing early, not reacting late.

We continue to oversee Downtown Revitalization Initiative projects to ensure they remain active and compliant, and we are following up with the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force regarding our static display application. We are also carefully evaluating new grant opportunities to ensure they align with staff capacity and provide measurable return to our residents.

The City of Oneida remains financially stable, operationally disciplined, and strategically positioned for long-term success. I remain committed to transparent leadership, responsible financial management, and steady forward progress on behalf of this Council and our community.

Thank you.