

Transcript: Mayor Lefebvre – First 100 Days Speech February 22, 2023

Bonjour, Hello, Aanii. Thank you all for joining me today, and thank you to Ed Archer for your introduction and land acknowledgment.

It is my pleasure today to officially mark my and council's first 100 days in office – a milestone that provides an opportunity to reflect on the activities and accomplishments of council so far this term. I know that, as a city, we have much to celebrate -- and even more to look forward to. As part of my commitment to transparent leadership, I'm excited to share more details with you today.

As Mayor of Greater Sudbury, it is my priority to ensure our city is a welcoming place to live, work, and play – for our current residents and future citizens. As our population grows over the coming decades, we must ensure we are attracting employment opportunities, providing housing accommodations, and investing in community and recreational opportunities for all – all within the fiscal reality in which we find ourselves. Ça fait parti de la vision que je veux vous parler aujourd'hui. These are all part of the vision I am affirming today, as we chart our path from the first 100 days to the next thousand... and beyond.

Indeed, the vision I am affirming today as we move from the first one hundred days to the next thousand highlights our greatest resource in Greater Sudbury – our people. The importance of city staff for service delivery, the value of collaboration around the Council table, and how we will better enable the contributions volunteers and community organizations make in enhancing our quality of life. I will identify where we're going on my major campaign pledges, particularly when it comes to public safety, increasing housing supply, taking action on climate change, and engaging with other levels of government to ensure a sustained investment in Greater Sudbury's future.

Since my first days of working at Tom Davies Square, I have witnessed the dedication of our City employees and I have developed an even greater appreciation for the number of services they provide. Thank you for the hard work you put in day after day, especially throughout the challenges posed by the pandemic over the past years. From road maintenance teams to economic development officers, from recreation instructors to first responders, we are all part of making good things happen here in Greater Sudbury. Merci aux employés qui travaillent à l'hôtel de ville à tous les jours qui desservent nos citoyens.

During my first 100 days, I have had an opportunity to meet many of you, learn more about what you do, and see where you work.

Through my team, I will be organizing more formal and informal opportunities for us to meet. Employee wellness and job satisfaction is very important to me – and I will be looking to engage with all our colleagues. City staff, I want to make sure all employees are set up for success and feel supported in the important work you do; that is my commitment to you.

C'est important que le Conseil travail ensemble afin d'accomplir nos objectifs communs pour la Ville. It is also imperative that Council works collaboratively to achieve our collective goals for the City. Developing a positive and productive rapport with my colleagues around the Council table – many of whom I am happy to see here today – is a priority. One of the first things I did as I settled into the role of Mayor was to meet with each city Councillor. Like with all relationships, trust among members of Council is built over time, through respectful interactions and demonstrations of good faith. I will continue to meet one-on-one with Councillors to address issues of importance to them and our shared constituents.

As part of my campaign platform, I pledged to hold town halls across all 12 Wards throughout 2023. I am happy to share that this goal is well underway: I have already co-hosted two successful town halls with Ward 9 Councillor McIntosh and Ward

4 councillor Fortin, who joined me in Azilda just two weeks ago. I look forward to the town halls in the other 10 wards of the city.

I am committed to addressing the distinct needs of all our vibrant communities, including as these relate to community safety and service levels. As our community safety needs have evolved over the last few years, policing priorities have become increasingly complex and time-consuming. The 2023 City budget was passed last week and includes an increase in police officers and resources for all parts of the city. Thus with a focus on crime prevention and a more diverse police force, I believe we are making a step in the right direction to address our public safety needs.

Je dois vous avouer que je ne m'attendais pas d'approuver le budget dans les 100 premiers jours de notre mandat, mais grâce au travail acharné des conseillers et conseillères, ce travail est accompli.

I did not expect to have the budget approved in the first 100 days of our mandate but given the hard work of Councillors it was passed.

I toured a number of fire and paramedic stations in our City, so that I may see for myself the physical state of these facilities – and better familiarize myself with their service area boundaries.

We have asked for a report on the financial projections for completing repairs to meet provincial standards in all stations – and the costs of “continuing with the current approach”. This is in addition to the ongoing public consultation regarding emergency service stations. We have also announced the return of an additional Deputy Fire Chief representing volunteer firefighters.

In a further commitment to public safety, council invested in two additional full-time ambulances through the recently approved budget. These examples demonstrate how, in these first 100 days, council has made the safety of Greater Sudbury residents a top priority. We will continue this focus in a thoughtful, respectful and fiscally responsible way.

We will also continue to review our community spaces and buildings, including parks, playgrounds, pools, arenas, community centres and libraries. This will allow council to understand how our facilities are being used, what kind of amenities will be required in the coming years, and which sites require additional investment – and how we can best achieve this. As most of this community infrastructure is now many decades old, council faces challenging decisions when it comes to allocating our available resources and meeting service level expectations. I am confident that, as we saw with budget deliberations last week, council will work together to find solutions in a timely manner.

Pour moi, il est important que les citoyens du Grand Sudbury voient un Maire qui représente tous les gens de chaque coins de la ville.

It is essential that citizens see their Mayor as representing all Greater Sudburians. As I have done in my first 100 days, I will continue to participate in events across our city. It has been my pleasure to attend special occasions across the city – like an Onaping Falls Lions Club community breakfast, with Councillor Montpellier, and the Walden Winter Carnival, with Councillor Vagnini. Councillor Landry-Altmann, Councillor Parent and I celebrated the renaming of Claude Charbonneau Park, and I joined Councillor Signoretti at the ribbon cutting of the new all-season paved rink at Robinson Playground. Councillor Leduc joined me at the Sudbury Curling Club 130 year anniversary, and Councillor Sizer, Councillor Cormier, and others attended our tree lighting ceremony in December. Councillor Labbé was the host and moderator for my joint town hall with Marc Serré about housing needs in Capreol, and Councillor Lapierre and I enjoyed the vin et fromages at the 50th anniversary of the Club d'Age d'Or de la Vallée.

All of these experiences have repeatedly revealed the countless volunteer hours and many contributions of engaged citizens that improve the quality of life in our communities. Playground associations who maintain our outdoor skating rinks; Community Action Networks who host events and enable community gardens; our accessibility advocates ensure the City becomes more accessible for everyone, and so many more: these volunteers provide opportunities for our children to be active and for neighbours to get to know one another. In recognition of the services and benefits that volunteers provide in our communities, we at the city should be asking, “How can we help you achieve your projects?”

Ainsi, il est important qu'on appuie les nombreux groupes de bénévoles qui fait du Grand Sudbury une place que l'ont veux vivre et grandir.

It is for this reason I have asked for the creation of a one-stop shop model for volunteer-led and non-profit community initiatives to access support through the City. This model will ensure community groups have a clear resource person who acts as a navigator through the various departments, connecting groups and volunteers with the City services they require. By directly working with these important volunteer groups, we can better

support them as they give back to our community – and encourage even more individuals to participate in civic initiatives.

We must also address barriers many of our residents face when it comes to accessing adequate and dignified housing. Earlier this month, my motion to direct staff to prepare a Housing Supply Strategy was unanimously accepted by Council. A Housing Supply Strategy that encourages thoughtful, targeted and sustainable residential development is one piece of a broader strategy to grow our population and local economy. To ensure our city is a welcoming place for all, we need a robust supply of housing to accommodate the evolving needs and life stages of families, groups and individuals. The Housing Supply Strategy will include policy options to promote a true mix of housing types across Greater Sudbury's communities – including methods to increase and protect the number of affordable rental units. I will continue to work with Sudbury Member of Parliament Viviane Lapointe and Nickel Belt Member of Parliament Marc Serré to access federal funding for affordable housing projects.

The Housing Supply Strategy will also guide a proactive approach to transitional housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness or precarious housing. In addition to providing living accommodations, transitional housing programs often include counseling for mental health and addictions, and other

community services support. It is essential we continue to invest in these services, and I am hopeful the City of Greater Sudbury will have 90 new transitional housing units by the end of 2024. However, I want to be clear we will continue to be partners with the Provincial government to ensure these social services are properly funded.

While the City does provide transitional and community housing services, we are not in the business of building houses – we do not have an in-house construction group. Rather, through issuing permits and providing planning, zoning and engineering functions, the City impacts the pace and direction of private sector development. Right now, around 6,300 residential units have been approved by the City through draft approved subdivisions and site plans – but are not yet built. Nous avons tous entendu parler des délais pour l'obtention des permis et des autres obstacles auxquels les entreprises, les citoyens et les investisseurs sont confrontés lorsqu'ils présentent des projets. Je m'engage avec le Conseil à faire en sorte que nous éliminions les obstacles inutiles à la croissance et au développement durables.

It is my aim to work with council to provide favourable conditions to encourage sustainable growth and development here in Greater Sudbury. A motion by Councillor Parent to encourage more investments in our City by making it easier to conduct

business with City hall does just this. I am looking forward to seeing the results of this study implemented.

Introducing a Housing Supply Strategy is one action we have already taken to position Greater Sudbury for future success and to achieve the population growth that we need to pay for our infrastructure needs.

A few words in regards to the motion at last night's council meeting to modify Junction East cultural hub project. I have requested a pause to allow for an additional review. During the campaign, I stated that I believe we need to invest in ourselves, invest in our amenities, and invest in our future – and I want to reiterate my position that I am in favour of an Art Gallery and Library.

I also stated I would do my due diligence of the project. While reviewing the projected construction and maintenance costs of a new large building, knowing we face infrastructure challenges in many other buildings, I came to the conclusion we need additional analysis and recommendations to understand our options. We must rethink how this important community project moves forward.

Je crois fermement en la vision du projet de La Jonction Est. Je sais qu'ensemble avec nos partenaires, nous pouvons réimaginer

ce projet afin d'assurer la vitalité de notre centre-ville à un prix qui tient compte des besoins concurrents d'investissements de notre infrastructure municipale et qui nous permettront de voir cet important projet se concrétiser au moyen d'une approche responsable et innovante. Je tiens à remercier les partenaires de ce projet pour leur collaboration continue et leur dévouement alors que nous entamons cette nouvelle phase du carrefour culturel de La Jonction Est.

I want to thank Councillors who supported the motion and the confidence they have in moving these projects forward in an appropriately ambitious way and I look forward to working with the tenant partners.

Also within our first 100 days, council has undertaken a review of the City's Corporate Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan, first released in 2017, provides a road map of the values and objectives that guide staff work plans and service delivery. Many of the themes align with my own priorities – you have already heard echoes of the sections focused on “Housing” and “Strengthening Community Vibrancy” earlier in my remarks today. But there are some important updates to the Strategic Plan I am championing, particularly with respect to climate change and the green economy. I am happy to share these updates with you this morning.

I am asking for the creation of a Climate Resilience senior staff position – reporting at the level of the Executive Leadership Team – to lead our city’s actions to meet our emissions reductions targets and foster strategies for environmental resilience and climate adaptation. Empowering a senior staff member to do this work is a natural extension of the previous council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019 and adoption of the Community Energy and Emissions Plan. It is a vitally important step in ensuring our community is able to address the impacts of climate change so future generations can continue to enjoy a high quality of life in Greater Sudbury.

This Climate Resilience leadership position will have the authority to provide direction and guidance across all City departments, ensuring we have the knowledge and resources to implement actions identified in our Community Energy and Emissions Plan in a timely fashion. From improving natural infrastructure assets that manage stormwater, to proposing social procurement policies, to supporting local food systems, this new leadership position will take a holistic approach to climate and community resilience.

Indeed, a focus on the green economy is another one of my priority additions to an updated Strategic Plan. Sudbury is poised to be a leader in the transition to battery electric vehicles, drawing

on our existing expertise in the global mining supply and services sector.

In my first 100 days in office, I have already met with Ministers from the provincial and federal government to ensure that as they invest in critical mineral sectors, they think of Greater Sudbury.

While in Ottawa in December, I spoke with Minister Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources, and Minister Champagne, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, to ensure they are aware of the great potential in our city of developing the technology to access these critical minerals as well as process them.

Maintenant, il est temps que Sudbury fait parti de la chaine d'approvisionnement du monde des batteries, donc de l'exploration des minéraux critiques à la création des batteries.

It is important to make it well known that the citizens of Greater Sudbury are supportive of these new opportunities. We continue to support exploration, extraction, and processing but now, we want to be part of the added-value piece of the supply chain. We have the land, the talent and the resources to make it all happen here in Greater Sudbury. I want to make this clear to my colleagues at the Federal level as well as the Provincial level.

Greater Sudbury is already home to original equipment manufacturers who are building our mines of the future including

underground battery electric vehicles – and I am committed to supporting the growth of this industry. I and Council will continue to champion the innovation and research happening in our city, for example, the great work to recycle or reclaim mine waste, which results in the win-win proposition of reclaiming additional mineral resources and reducing the environmental footprint of the mining industry. I believe this is the next generation of our Sudbury regreening story.

I have shared these sentiments with provincial Ministers Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Minister Rickford, Minister of Northern Development and Minister of Indigenous Affairs, as well as Minister Pirie, Minister of Mines. In addition to championing our city's place in the critical minerals space, I will also work with all government partners to address our infrastructure funding gap. As a northern community with a large geographic area, we face mounting pressures on asset management and renewal, capital construction, and maintenance of core infrastructure. I along with Council will work with our partners at the Province in order to ensure that Greater Sudbury receives its share of the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund.

With respect to growing population, our green economy, investing in employment lands, and maintaining and building infrastructure,

I will have much more to say about this in my State of the City address at the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce in April.

Le rôle du maire est de diriger au moyen de gestion saine, d'investissements stratégiques et de résultats mesurables. Cela signifie promouvoir la ville et se faire le champion de l'innovation, tout en encourageant la croissance économique en attirant le talent et les investissements. Je ferai comprendre aux nouveaux arrivants, aux entreprises, aux paliers supérieurs du gouvernement et aux investisseurs que le Grand Sudbury est une communauté prometteuse et en pleine croissance.

As you can see, we have already accomplished a lot but as we move from the first 100 days into the next thousand days, one thing is clear: Council and I cannot do this alone. We need City staff on board, the hundred of volunteer organizations, and the citizens of Greater Sudbury, to believe in the potential of our Great City, and to support the efforts of all those who want to make Greater Sudbury the best place to live, work and play in Canada.

C'est le moment idéal de vivre et investir dans le Grand Sudbury – et j'espère que vous êtes d'accord pour dire qu'ensemble, nous pouvons continuer d'accomplir de bonnes choses.

I hope you agree that together, we can make good things happen for all of us in Greater Sudbury.

Merci. Thank you. Miigwetch.