

## **[Check Against Delivery]**

Good morning, everyone. Bonjour à tous. Aanii.

I'm very pleased to see so many familiar faces gathered here at City Hall, and I want to thank you all for taking the time to be here today as I reflect on my first two years as Mayor and share the direction, I want to lead our city in moving forward.

To my colleagues on City Council, your commitment to our city is instrumental in shaping the progress we've made over the past two years. I am grateful for your presence and continued partnership as we work together to build a brighter future for Greater Sudbury.

A special thank you to all the City staff here for your dedication and hard work. It's your effort, often behind the scenes, that has helped bring many of the initiatives that I'll be speaking about to life and ensure our city runs smoothly.

Before I begin, I'd like to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Anishnaabe peoples of the Robinson Huron Treaty, traditionally shared by the people of Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, Wahnapiatae First Nation, and Sagamok Anishnabek.

## **Indigenous Collaboration and Reconciliation**

True reconciliation requires not only dialogue but action.

I am proud of the close partnerships we've developed with the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and Wahnapiatae First Nation. True reconciliation requires not only dialogue but action.

Together, we've worked on shared initiatives that bring lasting benefits to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents, and we'll continue walking this path toward a more inclusive future.

We've recently had significant discussions with our Indigenous partners at the OECD Mining Cities and Regions Conference, and we're looking forward to collaborating on a full panel discussion at the 2025 PDAC Conference.

These opportunities allow us to showcase how Indigenous communities are central to Greater Sudbury's plans for sustainability and community-driven growth on the global stage.

## **Greater Together: A Collaborative Approach to Community Wellbeing**

Greater Sudbury is the best place to live, work, and play in all of Canada.

We are a city built on strength, resilience, and unity. Over the past two years, we've shown that when we come together, we can confront our most pressing challenges.

This is why today, I'm focusing on how we've collectively addressed some of our biggest challenges—such as homelessness, housing, mental health, addictions, and overall community safety and well-being.

No single organization can solve these challenges alone. But by collaborating, sharing resources, and listening to one another, we have begun creating solutions that work for everyone.

This is the core of the Greater Together initiative, which I've championed over the last two years. Many of the leaders here today—leaders from across our community—have been a key part of this important effort.

We've brought together social service agencies, healthcare providers, Indigenous leaders, local businesses and industries, educational institutions, and City staff, because we all have a collective responsibility to build an inclusive, welcoming, and economically thriving community.

This collaboration also includes a renewed focus on talent attraction and retention.

Greater Sudbury must remain a city where people want to build their careers and families, helping us grow our economy and strengthen our community and address the social determinants of health.

Thanks to programs like the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, we've been able to attract over 2700 new residents since the launch of the program, and just under 930 residents so far this year.

Immigration is playing a major role in shaping our success and growth.

But alongside growth, all our residents deserve to feel safe, respected, and valued in all corners of our city, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic status.

## **Housing: A Foundation for Stability and Dignity**

At the heart of building a strong and inclusive community is ensuring every resident has a place to call home.

City Council passed a resolution to end homelessness by 2030 and we've set out a roadmap with four key pillars:

- Prevention
- Rapid re-housing
- Supportive housing with wraparound services
- System-level recommendations

We haven't wasted any time investing in these solutions.

Our City Council has committed millions of dollars toward housing initiatives that offer not only shelter but also dignity and support.

We've been decisive and focused on results.

In just a few weeks, we will officially open the Lorraine Street Transitional Housing Project, which represents 40 units.

In collaboration with Health Sciences North, this project will feature on-site Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams providing 24/7 mental health care and life skills training.

This is more than housing—it's a pathway to stability and recovery.

Likewise, construction on the Peace Tower Project on Pearl Street is well underway.

This development brings another 38 affordable units to our city, helping us meet the urgent need for permanent housing.

Here, residents in need will have access to the nearby services they need to rebuild their lives.

These projects represent our unwavering commitment to ensuring every resident has a place to call home—not by criminalizing homelessness, but by offering pathways to stability and dignity.

In the meantime, we are stepping up to provide more emergency shelter spaces as winter approaches.

We've approved the opening of 75 newly designated warming spaces—25 at the Samaritan Centre and another 50 at Energy Court—to ensure that no one is left without support during the coldest months.

We know there is more to do. Just recently, City Council approved the purchase of 307 Cedar Street, which will increase our shelter capacity for women from 10 to 26 beds.

The City is also looking to convert a portion of these beds into transitional housing, providing short-term housing with wraparound services to help people get back on their feet.'

## **Supporting Veterans: Housing and Care for Those Who Served**

Two days ago, we marked Remembrance Day across the country.

Our local Legions do a fantastic job of preserving the legacy of our veterans, ensuring they are never forgotten.

I have also been in meaningful discussions with a number of our Legions, and I am committed to advocating for dedicated funding from the Provincial and Federal Governments to support a new affordable and supportive housing project for veterans.

We owe our veterans more than just our gratitude—we owe them the promise of stability, dignity, and support for their transition back to civilian life.

My hope is that this project will offer more than housing; it will provide mental health services, employment assistance, and a sense of community with the involvement of our local Legions.

Together, we can ensure our veterans can thrive in civilian life with dignity.

## **Supporting Youth: Investing in the Future**

Supporting our young people is an investment in our city's future.

As part of our upstream efforts of social development, we've launched several initiatives aimed at providing our youth with the support they need to thrive.

Earlier this year, I organized a backpack campaign to provide over 2000 backpacks filled with essential school supplies for young people in need.

This is a small step, but one example of how we are addressing challenges at their roots by lifting up our community from an early age.

Just yesterday, a new Youth Centre was officially opened at the YMCA.

This new space, funded by the City, will provide youth ages 12-18 a drop-in space where they can enjoy the YMCA's recreational amenities, access healthy snacks, receive homework assistance, and can be connected to additional service providers if needed. This is in addition to the City-run youth programs at community centres across Greater Sudbury.

But we're committed to going further. Over the next two years, we will continue to prioritize housing opportunities specifically for vulnerable youth.

By ensuring that our young people have access to stable housing and wraparound services, we'll not only provide them with a foundation of security but also give them the chance to build meaningful, productive lives. Supportive housing also assists them in remaining successfully housed, by building the skills and capacity for independent living.

The new Youth Advisory Panel to Council is a significant step in giving our young residents a platform to share their voices and shape the future of our city. We are actively recruiting young people from across all 12 Wards to participate in this new initiative.

By expanding youth programming and fostering an environment of engagement, we're building a stronger foundation for the future.

## **A new approach to Community Safety and Well-Being**

These actions reflect our deep care for the well-being of all our residents. Good health isn't just about physical well-being—it's about mental, emotional, and social health, too.

That's why I have taken on the role of co-chair of the Community Safety and Well-Being Advisory Panel.

This panel is crucial to the Greater Together vision I mentioned earlier this morning: ensuring that all residents feel safe, respected, and valued, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status or other identities.

Together with organizations like Greater Sudbury Police Services, Health Sciences North, Public Health, school boards, and many others, we are creating a coordinated approach to safety and well-being, filling in gaps and reducing duplication to ensure every resident has access to the services they need.

The work of this Panel is essential to addressing immediate needs and coordinating crisis response, and it is also about planning for a longer time horizon.

By investing in proactive strategies and evidence-informed programming in the early years, the work of the Panel and its member institutions aims to support healthy social development and positive feelings of belonging among our youngest citizens.

Over the next six months, the Advisory Panel will be reviewing and updating our approach to Community Safety and Wellbeing, with a revised Plan due to the Province in July 2025.

Like other strategies our Council has supported over the past two years, the updated Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan will be action-oriented, with desired outcomes and specific timelines for their achievement.

It's about creating a safety net for all residents, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

I would like to thank my current co-chair, Marc Gauthier, and outgoing co-chair, Councillor Sizer, for their leadership guiding the Panel over the years.

As we look to the next two years, Greater Together will continue to be our guiding principle.

We'll build on the strong foundations we've laid, fostering inclusion, belonging, and prosperity so that all residents have equal access to resources and opportunities.

## **Growth and Development**

With population levels reaching their highest on record at approximately 180,000 people and counting, we know that housing, which has been a common theme today is critical.

I want to take a moment to expand on the outcomes of Council's efforts to expand housing.

This includes the Calls for Action of the Future-Ready Development Services Committee, and the detailed studies and plans in our Housing Supply Strategy.

We surpassed the housing targets set by the Province in 2023 and are well above our targets already for 2024.

In fact, we're 50% of the way to our 10-year goal set by the Province already just 3 years in.

So far this year, we've issued permits for 833 new housing units, representing over \$205 million in construction.

Just think, in 2022 that number was 457 new residential housing units. In 2023, 635, and now in 2024, we're at 833 new housing units through the first three quarters of the year.

We've also issued nearly 1,000 permits for alterations and renovations, worth \$65.6 million.

Projects like the Finlandia Expansion with 20 new dwelling units are also critical for our aging population, and the Province has recently announced \$35 million in funding to modernize and enhance the capacity of our water/wastewater infrastructure.

This investment will unlock the development of 3,300 homes in the Lively-Walden area, preparing our community for future growth.

But growth isn't just about housing. In the coming two years, shovels will be in the ground for both the Event Centre and the Cultural Hub—two cornerstone projects that will enrich our city, attract visitors, and celebrate the creativity and talent of our residents.

These projects will enrich our city, attract visitors, and showcase the incredible talent and creativity of our residents.

They represent more than economic growth—they represent a sense of belonging and pride in Greater Sudbury.

And our investments won't stop there. Council will continue to invest in our roads, bridges, and recreational amenities, ensuring that our city remains welcoming, connected, and ready to meet the needs of a growing population.

### **Commitment to Sustainability: Protecting Our Green Spaces**

As our city grows and develops, we must also protect our unique ecology and natural environment.

I am particularly proud of our local 30x30 initiative, which aims to conserve 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030.

This goal honours and continues to build on five decades of regreening partnerships. By protecting green spaces, we are also ensuring we have capacity to adapt to a changing climate.

Last night, Council received an update on the work of the 30x30 Task Force. This presentation highlighted how Greater Sudbury is a national leader in protecting biodiversity and natural spaces.

The City has demonstrated our commitment by pledging over 2,000 hectares of municipally-owned green spaces, parks and natural areas to the national database of protected areas.

These are the public parks and natural spaces that enhance our quality of life here in Greater Sudbury. They include parks like Moonlight Beach... places we want to ensure we protect for the future, so our children and their children can enjoy our 330 lakes and green spaces.

Our cherished greenspaces are places for recreation, but also a crucial area for environmental education and conservation. Many residents have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to protecting the Laurentian University greenspace, and I support these ongoing efforts.

La ville a démontré son engagement en inscrivant plus de 2 000 hectares d'espaces verts, de parcs et de zones naturelles appartenant à la municipalité dans la base de données nationale des zones protégées.

We know we need affordable housing and spaces for our businesses to grow. In Greater Sudbury, it's not an "either - or" conversation --- we can have both. These projects demonstrate that we can fuel our economy, ensure everyone has a place to call home, and still protect our natural assets for current and future residents to enjoy.

## Way Forward

Looking ahead, the next two years will build on the strong foundations we've laid.

Greater Together will remain our guiding principle as we continue to expand housing, connect residents with the social services they need to thrive, and champion our growing local economy.

I'm proud of all that we've accomplished so far—these are just some of the highlights of the progress we've made together. I'm excited about the future, as we have much more to achieve, and I know that we are on the right path to continued growth and success for our community.

In closing, I want to thank each of you for your continued support, dedication, and belief in our shared future.

The past two years have been filled with progress, and with your partnership, I am confident we will overcome the challenges ahead and create an even stronger, healthier Greater Sudbury.

Thank you. Merci beaucoup. Miigwetch.