

State  
of the  
City

2015

État  
de la  
ville

Mayor Brian Bigger

June 18, 2015

Check against delivery



Welcome, bienvenue, anni.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank you for coming today. I see many faces in the audience who I recognize. All of you are contributing to the success of our community.

I want to thank Chamber Chair Jeff Geoffrey and President and CEO Debbi Nicholson for hosting us here today. I would also like to thank the Holiday Inn for their amazing hospitality. Let's take a moment to give the staff a round of applause!

I also want to make special note of the members of City Council who are present.

And I would also like to make mention of the others in the room.

It's an honour to be standing here as your Mayor, delivering my first State of the City address.

In my first six months in office, I've seen firsthand the passion and enthusiasm of the many people working, volunteering and living in our city. Each day, you serve as my encouragement and help me focus on leading a City we can be proud of.

Of course, if you had told me a year and a half ago, that I would have been standing here today, I would not have believed it. But I knew that in order for the City to succeed and prosper, someone with perseverance, dedication and the willingness to have hard conversations in the interest of openness, transparency and accountability had to step forward.

I have said many times in the past, that with caring and passion, you can do anything you put your mind to. So dream big.

And ladies and gentlemen, I have big dreams, for our City and for all of you.

We have an amazing Council. One with a diverse skill set and a passion to make our community a greater place.

With collaborative working relationships we will be able to achieve the many possibilities ahead of us.

I have had an opportunity to meet with many of you over the first six months at tours, meetings and community events. I have raised flags, proclaimed important celebrations and spoken to many of you.

And what I have learned is that we are a strong, proud, northern community with skills, knowledge and expertise that benefits the city, province, country and the globe.

Today, I would like to share the accomplishments as well as the challenges and opportunities that lie before us.

I have met with community partners to get a sense of key issues within the community, built relationships and forged a way ahead.

After decades of discussion, this Council finally repealed the bylaws restricting store hours. We have, as a Council, signed a charter, governing our behaviour and allowing us to serve in the best interest of the citizens. We are reminded of our Charter as it is a part of every Council agenda, and we have been delivering on that promise.

We held sewer and water rates, and taxes for 2015. And staff has been engaged to find better and less costly ways to deliver the services you expect, ensuring you are getting the best value for your hard-earned money.

I can also assure you that Bob Johnston, our Interim CAO is working hard to implement the new management structure at the City allowing us to be more citizen-focused and operationally effective.

Part of the rationale behind our recent restructuring was to improve efficiency and remove barriers from investment in Sudbury.

I want to make it easier and more attractive for developers to grow our city, to grow jobs and have confidence in the community where they have chosen to live and work.

That means not only streamlining processes, but creating the conditions for success in the community, so that new investors want to come to Greater Sudbury as well.

We have also looked at ways to assist our most vulnerable in the community, to ensure that the right services are available.

The Mobilization Round Table and NOAH's space, a collaboration of services to provide individuals and families in need, will continue to operate with support and assistance from the City.

We are working closely with the North East Local Health Integrated Network, the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Salvation Army to identify a new shared space for the men's shelter, the Corner Clinic, Samaritan Centre, Out Of the Cold Shelter and the Managed Alcohol Program.

In Council's 2015 approved budget, we provided funds to ensure that the arts community received additional dollars, that regreening efforts were taken into account, that watershed studies were funded, that pedestrian and cycling infrastructure were supported, that Mountain Street flooding issues would be fixed and that we invested in transit wayfinding.

We have also raised the Franco Ontarian and Ontario 400 flags at Tom Davies Square in celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Francophone presence in Ontario.

It takes a visionary Council to do these things. We are that group.

What else have I been up to, you ask?

One of the first things I did was to host the Northern Ontario Large Urban Mayors meeting right here in Sudbury. These are Mayors from the 5 largest communities in Northern Ontario.

We sat down to discuss issues of common interest and it was the starting point for an excellent relationship.

As you know, only half of our revenues come from municipal taxes. The remainder comes from other levels of government. As a result, relationship building is a very important part in my role as Mayor.

I attended the Ontario Good Roads Conference and the first Northern Leaders Meeting after the election. I have met with the Premier on a number of occasions, and have met with Provincial and Federal representatives, too.

In order to better understand the mining industry in Greater Sudbury, I have been down to the 6,800 foot level at the Creighton Mine and the 4,500 foot level at the Craig Mine.

I'd like to take a moment to share these amazing experiences with you.

I could have never believed the fascinating work being done underground unless I had seen it with my own eyes. At the SNO Lab, I was able to see particle physicists studying dark matter.

There are people from around the world studying some of the most complex research projects right here underground in Sudbury.

When I was at the Craig mine, I was completely blown away by the work being done. I was able to see first-hand how ore is extracted and the incredible amount of work, planning and skill required.

It's another world down there.

I also attended the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada Conference, or PDAC as it's known. While I was there I met many of our local mining service and supply company representatives.

While at PDAC, I learned the true value of our mining service and supply sector and what it means to the mining industry.

In each of my meetings and visits, I spoke about our phenomenal research and innovation capacity, our world-renowned mining and mining service and supply industry, exceptional educational facilities and our incomparable expertise in land reclamation, greening and lake water quality.

I did this because the world needs more Sudbury and as long as I'm in office, I will be this city's best champion.

As some of you may know, I also sit on the board of the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities. In May, we had a fantastic opportunity to host the conference this year, right here in Greater Sudbury. With 300 delegates from 110 communities across North Eastern Ontario, it was extremely productive as we shared ideas on how we can work together to strengthen our Northern economy.

The Premier was our key note speaker and eight provincial Cabinet Ministers also attended. The staff leading the charge from the City did an amazing job and I thank them again.

Recently, I was asked to join the board of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, or AMO, representing the North as a part of the 5 person Large Urban Caucus. At AMO meetings, I will bring our strong, proud, Northern voice to the table on many of the issues we have been facing here. In fact, I will be leaving here today to attend my first board meeting.

I know that it seems like I may be focusing my efforts outside of the community, but that's far from the case.

What I am seeking to achieve with these meetings and memberships is to firmly establish Greater Sudbury as the leader we all know we are. Because that's what you elected me to do.

I think there are also some opportunities for improvement, and I would like to share these with you.

I want the City to be more citizen and business-focused.

I have been advocating for that from day one. And I think you'll agree that there's been a shift.

I know the Chamber has a long history of working on red tape reduction. I have received feedback on this subject from our partners in the industry. I hear you.

We are looking at ways to address these challenges. I want you and your members to feel confident in the services you receive for your hard earned money.

Just as important, I have been working to make the City more open, transparent and accountable to the public. I want to make it easier for you to access information that's relevant to you. I also am determined to see that we do a better job of making ourselves available to the public, and openly communicate our information, issues, opportunities and successes.

As part of this, the City is currently working on its Open Government and Open Data policies, and I am very much looking forward to making our information more accessible to the public.

We are working to enhance service delivery through 311.

I'd now like to shift and provide you with some snapshots of investment in the community during my term as Mayor, but also over the last year. There are some exciting things happening here.

We have had some great announcements in the first quarter of 2015. Things that will benefit the community in the long-term.

A new urgent care centre which will see five family physicians and three urgent care doctors will soon open in Chelmsford.

Also worth mentioning is the new family medicine clinic which opened at the corner of Second Ave and Bancroft Dr. earlier this year.

The City of Lakes Family Health Team was approved in Chelmsford and an additional six family physicians have also been recruited in 2015. They will

provide regular access to primary health care for approximately 8,200 citizens of Greater Sudbury once they start practice.

To-date, six feature films, one television series, two television episodes and one music video were filmed in Greater Sudbury.

This resulted in a direct local spend of approximately \$5.6 million and involved a total in upwards of 200 crew. Four more films are being created in Greater Sudbury this summer.

We have committed to investing \$1 million over 5 years in CEMI to study ultra deep mining technology. This is something that is extremely important to the economic success of the mining industry in Sudbury moving forward.

A \$15 million investment will be made in AMRIC, to convert the former St. Theresa's school to a cutting edge medical research centre, creating 35 new full-time jobs and 28 part-time jobs, helping grow the medical research cluster in Greater Sudbury, pursuing vaccines and treatments for some of the most complex diseases.

Of course, this past year also saw some investments that I'm sure you'll all remember.

Mohawk Garnet Inc, located in the northeastern part of the city, invested about \$60 million to develop a mine and processing facilities, creating 62 new jobs.

Vale invested \$760 million to reopen Totten Mine, the first mine the company has opened in nearly 40 years. It employs 200 people and has an expected lifespan of about 20-years.

\$4.6 million was invested for Northern Water Sports Centre on the shores of Lake Ramsey. It will improve access for local athletes and will opens up opportunities to host national and international events.

And NORCAT invested \$2.8 million to renovate and expand its incubator center.



Some amazing things are happening when it comes to post-secondary education.

Collège Boréal will launch its new prospecting and mineral exploration program this fall, preparing students to work in the earliest stages of mineral search and discovery.

Cambrian College graduated 12 students the first cohort of Youth Exposure to Skilled Trades program, thanks to a partnership between Atikameksheng Anishnawbek First Nation, the College and the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. Students developed welding, carpentry, electrical and plumbing skills.

Laurentian University is amidst a \$60 million campus improvement program to be completed in December of 2016, and the School of Architecture build is well under way.

There's a lot going on here as you can see. And I haven't yet mentioned that we're the happiest community in Canada! Isn't that exciting?

I'd like to believe it's because of the amazing quality of life we have here...with access to excellent arts and culture and world class natural spaces.

We need to tell the world about these and all the other things that make us so happy.

Some say that we should position our community as more than just a mining town. But the reality is that we are the world's biggest, most advanced mining community.

When I look at the dollars and cents, the mining and mining service and supply sector is still one of the keys to our future success, as it contributes almost \$4 billion of our \$5.5 billion GDP.

And the industry has weathered the storm of the global economic downturn as they have found ways to be innovative and sell their product and expertise abroad.

Now we need to take our community to the next level. We need to make it even more attractive to those living outside of it who may be considering a move or investment.

It's reassuring to hear that Vale has reached an agreement with its employees, in advance of the deadline, no less, providing stability to the community.

An interesting stat: if all of the mining projects planned over the next 10 years are successful, we will need to attract 20,000 skilled employees .

And how do we do that?

We need to do a number of things. We must have a strategy and a plan for the next 10 years. And that's why #gs2025, part of my Vision 2025 initiative, as well as Council's strategic plan are so important.

So now we need to forge ahead. To make this community more prosperous, unique and diverse, which will attract people to Greater Sudbury. People who will figure out what we already know.

Last Friday, Council sat down as a group and set its priorities for our term. And I think we've done a good job of setting a framework and direction to staff on what we'd like to see.

Before I provide you a bit more of an update on the session, I'd like to tell you a bit about what I want to see. Some of these I will already have mentioned, but I feel it important to reiterate them.

- I want to see a strong emphasis in openness, transparency and accountability.
- Restoring the public's trust in government and it's pride in the community.
- Increased economic development.
- Enhanced citizen focus.

- A decrease in red tape.
- A vibrant and beautiful downtown.
- Complete neighborhoods and communities.
- Improved transportation and road infrastructure.
- Communication about our land reclamation successes.
- AND an understanding of and protection of the beauty of our environment.

My vision includes activation of the Downtown Masterplan and transit hubs as a solution to some of the issues we face downtown. It also includes Bell Park.

What would happen if we looked at new options for the transit terminal?

I want Greater Sudbury prosper, grow and thrive. We can increase economic development in a number of areas, building on our successes in health care, research, mining, the environment and tourism.

We have 3,700 lane km of roads....why can't we be the centre of expertise for road building strategies?

Let's also protect and preserve what we have for future generations.

Why can't we be the centre of expertise for freshwater lakes and watershed protection strategies?

We have 330 lakes... let us capitalize on the massive global focus on environmental issues and take our inherent strengths as a world class natural space and lead the charge.

We should also appreciate the beauty of nature that surrounds us. And appreciate the short community we have.

Sometimes we take all of this for granted.

Looking at the strategic planning session we held on Friday, I know my vision is shared with our fellow Councillors and our Interim CAO.

It was engaging, focused and collaborative. Aimed at identifying the way ahead. And now another step closer to getting there.

I am proud of the relationship Council has built in a very short period of time. And we've all agreed that we will undertake the following in our term.

We have set the following priorities:

We want to see growth & economic development. We want to create jobs, allocate resources effectively, encourage private sector investment and expand our tax base.

This includes a focus on things like the arts and culture, housing, jobs, planning and technology.

We want to see responsive, fiscally prudent, open government. This builds trust, teamwork, responsiveness, and the ability to act on behalf of our citizens.

We are increasing our focus on accountability, transparency, trust and open communications.

We want to see quality of life and place. Council wants to attract and retain talent, spur civic pride and champion the essence of our communities.

We want to include healthy initiatives, pride of place, assistance our aging population, provide enhanced leisure services and recognize and provide resolution to gaps in the system.

And Council wants to see sustainable infrastructure. This is required for a better quality of life, provides safe and secure roads as well as facilities sewer and water infrastructure and takes into account environmental stewardship.

This direction from Council will provide a guide to staff on the development of a plan and action items for our way forward. And will also provide context to the discussion for Vision 2025.

I know this looks like we have a lot to do. But I truly believe that our successes are starting to build on each other.

So in closing, I thank you for taking the time to be here today. I want you to be proud of the City of Greater Sudbury.

I hope you'll take the following with you:

Quite a bit has been accomplished in only a short period of time.

There has been significant investment in the community over the past year.

And, while there is certainly more to be done to make Greater Sudbury an even better place, we have a plan to do just that.

The public has placed their trust in Council to lead the City of Greater Sudbury. And you can be confident that we will work in your best interests in every decision we make.

I look forward to working with you in the coming years, as we take our community to the next level.

Thank you. Merci. Megwiich.