

State  
of the  
City



2018

État  
de la  
ville

Mayor / Maire Brian Bigger

June 21, 2018 / le 21 juin 2018

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Good afternoon everyone and welcome. Bonjour à tous et bienvenue. Annii. Bojo.

Thank you all for being here for my 4<sup>th</sup> State of the City Address.

I would like to recognize that today is National Indigenous People's Day and that we are gathered together on the territory of the Robinson-Huron Treaty, shared with the people of the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek and Wahnapiatae First Nations and the Métis People.

Thank you to all of you in attendance and thank you for the opportunity to tell you what we have accomplished thus far.

I want to thank Chamber Board Chair Michael Macnamara, President and CEO Debbi Nicholson, and the team at the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce for all your efforts in organizing today's event.

I'd also like to thank today's event sponsors including OLG, CN, Fisher Wavy, Hot 93.5, Eastlink, Pioneer Construction and Plan A Health Care Staffing Solutions.

And lastly to the always exceptional hosts here at the Caruso Club. How about a round of applause for the excellent food!

To all of my colleagues on City Council and to all City Staff in attendance, it's truly been an honour serving as your Mayor and being able to work alongside City Council and City Staff.

I also want to thank my wife, Lori, for supporting me here today and every day. And thank you Lori for supporting me in running for Mayor once again.

I want to ask all of you to think about how much progress has been made not just by Council and the City but the community at large over the last 4 years.

What we have been able to do is grow the community and create a path forward for future growth.

Change and progress takes time and commitment. When I was elected, the public was clear that they wanted to see change in how things were done at City Hall.

You wanted change and together with Council, we've delivered so much change in how the city runs.

We heard you. You wanted a Council that worked together. We've done that to make many decisions to move us forward.

We've gotten many things done that had been priorities for years. We've built relationships and we've advocated strongly for our community, making sure that we are and will continue to be at the table with other levels of government.

The momentum started with a hotly debated topic; to repeal the store hour bylaws. It was a very easy decision for this council, and we worked together to set priorities for the community and the progress continued.

We listened to you and used our conversations with you at the doors to establish a strategic plan to guide us as a Council and we have worked hard to share this plan with other levels of government and to implement as many elements as we could.

I also fulfilled my promise to the community to find efficiencies through the P6M initiative.

This allowed City Council to hold taxes to a 0% increase in the 1<sup>st</sup> year while we determined the best way to prioritize spending and invest in our community moving forward.

An important aspect of my role as Mayor is advocacy. I am so honoured that over my term, we have received over \$160 million in funding from other levels of government to help us grow.

Many of the projects I will speak to later would not have been able to move forward without investment from the federal and provincial governments. So thank you so much to our partners.

We've invested in our roads. Maley Drive is well underway, the preliminary work on the 4-laning of MR 35 has also begun. We have developed a plan to improve public transit, and made major decisions on community infrastructure like the events centre and projects in the downtown.

That takes collaboration, hard work and vision.

And being able to lead Council to make key decisions requires leadership.

As one vote around the table, it's imperative that we work together and I am so proud of our Council and our accomplishments.

I'm confident that we have delivered. And we will continue to deliver.

I want to continue to build your trust by delivering excellent service to you, for you.

In 2015, Council set a roadmap like never before. We set a strategy to bring us forward and to grow our community.

Today, I'd like to provide you with updates based on that plan during our term. You'll be hearing about improving our infrastructure, our economic development strategies and providing a better quality of life for you, our residents.

So without further adieu, I'll begin my presentation and speak about one of our community's favourite seasons, construction.

As a Council, we have prioritized infrastructure investments like never before in the history of Greater Sudbury

Let's talk about some of the work that will be taking place but first I'll do a little bit of a recap.

During this term of Council, we have approved roads capital budgets of over \$300 million compared to \$140 million over the previous 4 years. More than doubling the investment in roads.

Beginning in 2015 through to 2017, we also increased our roads operating budget by close to 10 per cent.

In 2017, Council also passed a motion intended to increase the level of maintenance on our gravel and surface treated roads.

This infrastructure is an important part of our ongoing effort to make our roadways safer for our residents.

So – what are we doing with this money in 2018?

It's going to be an extremely busy construction season once again. Our staff has never worked harder on your behalf.

The four-laning of MR 35 was included in the 2018 budget, with work taking place during the 2018/2019 construction seasons.

The 2018 Budget also included work on Lorne Street from Elm Street to Power Street.

As many of you are aware, work on the Maley Drive extension continues with construction of a new four lane divided roadway from Lasalle Extension to Barry Downe Road along with the construction of an overpass near Collège Boréal and the completion of the interchange at MR 80.

The section of Maley Drive from Barry Downe to the east is next.

Work is anticipated to be completed by the fall of 2019. I continue to be amazed by the progress that has been made on this project and I am excited to see its completion.

I am also pleased to see that the construction work on Maley Drive is currently running a \$4 million dollar surplus to date.

In addition to these major road projects, road resurfacing will take place at various locations throughout our city including West Bay Road, Grassy Lake Road, MR 4, Montpelier Road, and Montee Rouleau.

A total of \$10 million in culvert and bridge rehabilitation is taking place this year including Bowlands Bay Bridge and the William Avenue Bridge.

We have also taken a new approach to road maintenance. We are repairing the entire lane width of problem areas, to address major pothole concerns.

We are making good headway. We are also working with the Ministry of Transportation and other northern municipalities to do research on how to best address the pothole issues. It was something I brought up at the most recent Ontario Good Roads Association conference and something I am really excited about.

We've also invested in what's under the roads.

Over this term, Council has approved capital investments in our water/wastewater infrastructure of almost \$160 million, a \$20 million increase over the previous 4 years, = with over \$35 million dollars this year alone going towards several projects such as water main and sanitary sewer lining at various locations throughout our city.



In 2015, we dedicated \$800,000 per year and now we have completed 16 kms worth of cycling infrastructure and 8.5 kms of new sidewalks including the addition of a sidewalk on the north side of the Kingsway, during this term of Council.

We will be delivering over 25 kms more, helping to make cycling a safer and more convenient travel option for residents in our community in the future.

Beginning this summer, we will be working on a plan for a cycling path along Paris Street and Notre Dame Avenue from Regent Street in the south to Lasalle Boulevard in the north.

And this work has not gone unnoticed.

Greater Sudbury was recently recognized with a Bicycle Friendly Community Bronze designation by Share the Road Cycling Coalition.

This was awarded for progress being made to make cycling in Greater Sudbury safer, and for the strong community partnerships formed and the rapid pace at which the City has become more bicycle friendly.

Improving our public transit system is something that our citizens have been longing for, and as Mayor, something I have been eager to see improve.

Now thanks to our partnership with both the Provincial and Federal Government, we have a reliable and dedicated funding agreement which will give us the opportunity to invest almost \$100 million over the next 10 years into Greater Sudbury Transit and Active Transportation initiatives that connect our transit routes together. This is as a result of the hard work and planning that occurred to signal that we were ready to move our city forward.

These and other infrastructure investments are so important to the maintenance and economic vitality of our community. We will continue to identify new ways to stimulate investment and growth.

And growing our economy is something that I have worked hard at along with Council throughout our term.

We are experiencing growth; in fact our GDP now is at \$8.4 billion per year and is forecasted to continue to grow.

We are the only Northern Ontario municipality that has experienced growth. And it's something to be proud of.

Greater Sudbury was named one of the top 10 business friendly cities in the micro-city category by FDI Intelligence, a division of The Financial Times.

We are also very proud that, as an organization, Standard and Poors has recognized the strength of our financial management.

They have provided us with a AA stable credit rating, allowing us to access some of the best interest rates available to fund our transformational projects and address our infrastructure gap.

We are confident in the steps that we are taking to invest in our community and our plans to create jobs here in Greater Sudbury and I will get into those plans now.

We have been making key decisions to move our community forward.

We also heard widely from industry stakeholders how excited and supportive they are of our bid provided to Noront Resources to be home to a ferrochrome processing facility.

We had a strong bid because we are strategically positioned economically and geographically.

This bid came together in large part thanks to our Economic Development Team and industry partners and we anxiously wait to learn of their decision.

The construction of the ferrochrome processing facility is proposed to begin within the next five to ten years at a cost of approximately \$1 billion. The facility would create 350 permanent jobs and about 150 indirect jobs within our community.

There is also a real sense of optimism in the mining world and in my years of attending the PDAC conferences as Mayor, I have never felt more positivity from our local industry.

PDAC, if you have never been, is a real opportunity to see some of Greater Sudbury's finest and hard working companies and people promoting growth and development for our city

What you see is high value innovation, research, education, and service and supply expertise to the industry around the world.

There simply is no other mining community in the world that can compete.

Greater Sudbury based businesses are global leaders in so many aspects of mining. And we are so well respected.

And as was reported right before the launch of PDAC, Vale and Glencore have announced that they have plans to invest close to a billion dollars each in deep mine development.

KGHM is poised to invest in development to the Victoria Mine site and IAMGOLD is set to have shovels in the ground for their Côté Gold Project near Gogama in 2019.

For the first time in 20 years, exploration and drilling is once again setting a positive and optimistic outlook for growth in our community.

These are huge investments in our community and a strong sign of confidence in the future. Local wealth creation is essential for our future growth and diversification.

Our post-secondary institutions and our over 300 mining service and supply companies are recognized as global leaders in areas like Ultra Deep Mining Technology, Autonomous Equipment and Environmental Sustainability.

That is where the most important growth, research and diversification is occurring.

New research and development businesses as well as mining service and supply companies have invested multi-millions locally in the last year and are continuing to be drawn to our community.

Investors interested in nickel, copper, cobalt, lithium and other materials required to build batteries and electric vehicle technology are turning their attention towards Greater Sudbury.

As Mayor, to hear business owners tell you that they have plans to expand and hire in an industry that has had to show some real resiliency these last few years is really positive.

We are also stimulating economic development with our large projects, those that are transformational and economic development driven, as well as providing an enhanced quality of life for our residents.

I'll start with the Junction which combines the Greater Sudbury Convention/Performance Centre and the Library/Art Gallery.

Although separate, they will be located on a shared site on the current location of the Sudbury Community Arena.

In early spring, we conducted a community engagement campaign. Both projects are lead by dynamic and engaged groups of community stakeholders, and I would like to thank all of you for your hard work.

I look forward to seeing the results on July 10<sup>th</sup> when the working group presents to Council.

And on the event centre, we are in the midst of our procurement process and have ensured that we have taken all the necessary steps to maintain accountability, transparency and fairness.

It has been a long process from the selection of the location, to the integrated site plan, a financial plan, creating evaluation criteria for the design/build proposals and approving the rezoning of the properties. We fully believe that we can have this new event centre open for use in 2020.

Our building statistics tell another positive story.

2017 was the best year in total construction value that we have seen in our community since 2009, exceeding \$394 million dollars.

We are investing, and businesses and other organizations are investing in us too. It also means jobs both in construction and for the long term.

And as the jobs become available and in demand, we will continue to see housing growth.

We are already seeing an increase in the number of actual permits issued compared to last year due to an increase in residential permits.

According to Zoocasa, in a study that looked at median household incomes and average home prices in April of this year, Greater Sudbury ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most affordable city in Ontario.

Our affordability is a major selling point as we grow our community and it presents a big opportunity ahead of us to attract newcomers.

Local business owners and chamber members have asked that we work on finding the skilled workers that they need and help in navigating through the current system to bring in international workers.

In fact, when I had the opportunity to speak to the Prime Minister at City Hall, it was one of the points we discussed.

Discussions and plans are well underway on the construction of 3 new apartment buildings aimed at seniors and affordable housing in the downtown core by Jack Wolofsky as well as the Dalron development planned just outside the downtown.

Construction is also slated to get underway this summer on La Place des Arts on track to be open in 2020.

I am proud that we invested \$5 million dollars in this \$35 million dollar project, it will be a transformational space.

Our Council's investment of \$600,000 for the Downtown Sudbury Community Improvement Plan has stimulated \$38 million of investment by private businesses through our CIP Program Renewal.

And just think, from Indie Cinema to Canada's newest School of Architecture, La Place des Arts, an updated



public space at City Hall, a redesigned pedestrian friendly Elgin Greenway, the Brady Green Stairs and the Junction which will host our Library/Art Gallery and Convention/Performance Centre.

Have you ever seen so much positive energy built through investment activity in our community?

I have a strong passion to support our entire community. So, let's speak about the rest of our town centres for a moment.

Community Improvement Plans both invest in infrastructure and provide economic stimulus. Investing almost \$2 million towards the Capreol Waterfront Community Improvement Project which includes road work, sewers, lighting, landscaping and accessibility will benefit this part of our community.

We're also undertaking some exciting work to enhance the Whitson River Trail in Chelmsford through the Chelmsford CIP.

Council also approved plans to provide incentives to fund redevelopment in the town centres of Levack, Lively, Copper Cliff, the Flour Mill and Kathleen Street as part of our Main Street Revitalization Initiative.

I'd now like to speak to our successes in arts, culture and tourism because we do an excellent job of this in Greater Sudbury and it furthers our economy in a very real way.

2017 was a busy year no doubt and 2018 is shaping up to continue on that trend.

In the 2018 budget, Council allocated almost \$3 million dollars through the GSDC's Arts & Culture Grant Program.

We have supported the arts and creative community throughout my term including my 4<sup>th</sup> Mayor's Celebration of the Arts.

With film, so far during this term, there have been 58 film and television projects such as Letterkenny, Cardinal, Bad Blood and Indian Horse that were filmed locally which resulted in \$58 million dollars in local spending.

We have been established as the film capital of the north thanks to people like David Anselmo and Mark Montefiore.

The CEO of William F. White International, called Greater Sudbury easily one of the fastest-growing regions in the Canadian film and television industry.

That is why they established a new location over on Cambrian Heights Drive. This is a good example of investment being made in our community and why we continue to support this industry.

Opening up Greater Sudbury through arts and culture is one of the ways we will attract more people to Greater Sudbury.

In fact, 2017 brought with it over 1.2 million visitors to the community which generated over \$182 million in visitor spending.

That's an incredible result and a huge boost to our economy.

We have been proud to host various events like Rogers Hometown Hockey, The Amazing Race, the Telus Cup and look forward to hosting the ESSO Cup next year.

And a big shout out goes to Science North which was named Attraction of the Year amongst all tourist attractions in Ontario by the Ontario Choice Awards in 2017. Very exciting!

With an investment of only \$100,000, we saw over 115,000 non local visitors to Greater Sudbury last year with a spin-off of just shy of \$27 million. Talk about a return on investment.

Before I finish up here today, there are a few more positive news stories I want to share that really touch on our quality of life.

I'll start with our post-secondary education sector.

Here in the community there's a 6.7% increase in total enrollment bringing our total to 16,099 post-secondary students.

That's a remarkable number and this increase can be attributed to in large part a 25% increase in international students over the fall of 2017.

I know that each of the institutions in our community have exciting projects on the go which will only continue to boost enrollment introducing bright, young people to our community.

With regards to healthcare, we saw an increase in the number of doctors in the health sector. In fact, over the last four years to date, 21 family physicians have begun practicing in Greater Sudbury. Using return of service incentives, we have already recruited an additional 17 future family physicians who have committed to practice in our community over the next three years.

With exciting projects under construction at HSN and with HSNRI in full operation, I am optimistic that we will continue to be a leader in health and life sciences here in Northern Ontario.

I, along with our entire community, are very excited to see that construction is underway at Maison McCulloch Hospice on the expansion project which I know Council was proud to provide \$750,000 towards.

Council also provided support of \$1 million dollars towards the PET Scanner which I know our whole community is so happy to see construction underway.

I'm also proud of the partnerships that we've formed and the projects that Council has supported to deal with our most vulnerable.

Projects including the March of Dimes Wade Hampton Home Expansion, providing more care to those in the community living with an acquired brain injury.

And with the CMHA and other community groups, we're able to offer services like the Off the Street Shelter and Harm Reduction Services to our most vulnerable.

Another area we continue to be leaders in is the environment.

2018 is the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our City's Municipal Regreening Program.

It is a really big milestone for a program that has enabled thousands of residents to actively participate in the regreening of their living environment and as a result, this program is a point of pride for our community to continue to improve the quality of life for all Greater Sudburians.

It has also improved the ability for us to attract and retain business, provide growth opportunities and attract tourism to our city.

I just want to take the time to really thank members of the VETAC Committee and all residents who have contributed to the success of this program.

I would now like to speak about our playgrounds.

Twelve municipal playgrounds, one in each ward, will be renewed and improved this year through a partnership between the City of Greater Sudbury and United Way Centraide North East Ontario/Nord-est de l'Ontario.

In total, Council has approved a phased renewal of 58 municipal playgrounds identified as being in poor condition, over the next two to three years.

Ensuring that all children across our community can access quality recreation opportunities at their municipal neighbourhood playground is a key component of Council's Strategic Plan.

Speaking of recreation, three big announcements took place in the last couple of months that I think deserve some recognition.

The Fabio Belli Foundation in partnership with the Province, Rainbow District School Board and the City will be constructing an indoor multi-sport facility on the Lasalle Secondary School property.

The gem known as Kivi Park has really demonstrated the public's interest in walking, cycling, and outdoor recreational infrastructure and I can't thank Lily Fielding and the Wallace Family enough for their support and donations to this park. What an amazing place! And I understand this is just the beginning.

Thanks to all of the hard work and volunteer hours that go into maintaining the trails in the winter at Kivi Park, it has now become a para-hub, designated as Ontario's first training centre for para-nordic athletes.

I was also pleased to have brought forward a motion earlier this month which will allow City Staff to identify and work with our Olympic and Paralympic Medalists on naming opportunities in their honour at meaningful City facilities.

We also look forward to hosting a community celebration sometime in August for all of our Olympic Athletes who competed at the 2018 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Stay tuned for more details.

I also wanted to speak about some of the programs that we have made available to seniors.

Through our Age Friendly Community Action Plan, we have made some great progress.

We have made winter walking available at our public arenas, provided activities like Pickle Ball, more Francophone programming and signage at Pioneer Manor and helped ensure continued success at the Parkside Older Adult Centre.

We have also made more information and training available to aid transit and handi-transit users along with a new senior's active living guide.

I'm also proud of the hard work of our paramedics who have been providing community paramedicine to our older adult community.

Seniors are the backbone of our community, and we will continue to find ways to serve them well in the City of Greater Sudbury.

We are also seeing positive investments being made in seniors housing like Red Oak Villa on Ste. Anne Road, Dalron's affordable housing project on Paris St.

We're also looking forward to investments in long term care. Extendicare's Development on Algonquin Road will create hundreds of new long-term care beds in our community over the next couple of years.

Pioneer Manor staff are also working on plans for development to upgrade roughly 150 beds in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.



These investments in housing will really benefit our aging population. It is my goal to work with our development community to continue to spur these kinds of investments in housing for Greater Sudbury seniors.

Before I conclude today, I just want to reinforce just how hard Council and I have been working on your behalf.

Investing in our roads, in our community's quality of life, making our city more desirable for people and businesses and making it more accessible and easier to get around on public transit are just some of the many accomplishments we have met so far.

And together, we will continue to build on our success now and into the future.

Now, let's talk a bit about the future.

I am so happy to be your Mayor and I want to continue to build on this Council's success.

And to recap, we have had a lot of success.

We have listened to you and established a strategic plan to guide us as a Council, we have invested in our roads including major investments in Maley Drive and the future 4-laning of MR 35, we undertook a review of our transit system and worked with our government partners to deliver a 10 year transformation of our public transit

system, and we are delivering on community infrastructure like the events centre and new downtown projects.

I'd say we have done a lot. But of course there's still more to do. I want to see our community grow.

While I will get into more details in the coming months, I want to take this opportunity to share with you what I would like to continue to focus on as your Mayor.

I can assure you that I will continue to support and develop new initiatives that will enhance our local business ecosystem for growth, development and investment that creates jobs and prosperity within our community.

First and foremost, I will continue to deliver a regional view of our city by advocating for investment and support to all areas of our great community through community improvement plans, investment and future capital planning.

Investments in our roads, bridges, water pipes will continue, and this infrastructure will be improved.

Our treasured environment will continue to remain a priority and our water sources will continue to be studied, protected and enhanced.

As I talked about earlier today, affordable living options are a priority for our residents. Transit system improvements are an important piece of that plan.

Our affordability is an advantage and will be maintained through the development of affordable services and housing for young families, seniors and low income residents.

I will continue to support and encourage private sector investment aligned with these community needs.

Working alongside our post-secondary institutions, local businesses and partners in government to develop strategies so that we can attract and retain the talented and skilled workforce that is needed by businesses in our community.

As I said, I look forward to sharing more about my vision in the coming months and it is exciting to think about the prospects ahead for Greater Sudbury.

But for now, I want to thank you, the people, for making my job so enjoyable.

An honour which I hope together we can continue on the path forward.

Thank you very much. Merci beaucoup mes amis. Chi-Miigwetch.