Cities don’t happen by accident. They are...
August 2017

On behalf of the Planning Services Division, we are pleased to provide you with this Annual Report, which describes the team’s accomplishments in 2016. This report delivers on a key commitment that we made last year – that we would provide an annual update in the spirit of openness, transparency and accountability.

2016 was a good year for our community. The 2016 Census confirmed that our population grew slightly to just over 161,000 residents. On the residential front, CMHC estimates that housing starts were trending at 432 units by the end of last year as employment and wages grew. The Sudbury Real Estate Board reported that annual home sales stood at 2,352 units last year, up 2.3 percent from 2015. On the commercial front, several new businesses emerged. Many more existing businesses moved and took up home in either new or upgraded building stock. These trends were most evident along the Kingsway – one of our primary image corridors. Led by Laurentian University, the institutional sector also saw upgrades to existing and the construction of new capital stock.

2016 was a good year for our team, our most valuable resource. We charted a new strategic direction, grew our leadership competencies, delivered several significant projects, worked with the development community on a healthy number of development applications and continued to restore our natural environment and improve our sustainability. These accomplishments are described in more detail in the following pages.

We could not have realized these accomplishments without the support and collaboration of City Council, our colleagues at City Hall and our partners in the community. We are grateful for your support and look forward to collaborating with you to create more positive change in 2017!

Yours truly,

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Who we are

The Planning Services Division is a team of more than 40 talented and dedicated professionals committed to planning and building a great city. Our job is to look forward and define a future vision of the community, create policy frameworks that guide decision making consistent with that vision and work with our partners to create a great community. We are obliged to define and protect the public interest in our work. We provide sound and reasoned advice that support good planning outcomes. We create “shared tables” through open and engaging processes that allow stakeholders to come to the table and have their voices heard and understood. We administer fair, transparent, predictable and efficient approval processes. We restore the natural environment and improve sustainability.
Planning Services includes three sections:

**Community and Strategic Planning** monitors trends and provides long-range planning/policy advice; undertakes strategic community planning projects; and creates, maintains and analyses geographic base data, socioeconomic data, mapping, survey and aerial photography. This section includes Geographic Information Systems and Mapping.

**Development Approvals and Engineering** reviews, analyses and recommends Planning Act applications for decision; and implements land use-planning decisions. This section includes Development Engineering, the Committee of Adjustment and Consent Official.

**Environmental Planning Initiatives** leads landscape restoration, ecosystem health, biological integrity, energy conservation, air and lake water quality initiatives. This section includes EarthCare Sudbury and the Regreening and Lake Water Quality programs.
Our Key Metrics

**Inputs**
- 6 requests from Council
- 7 planning policy projects
- 360 development applications
- 1,193 address requests
- 385 routine GIS requests
- 24 special GIS projects

**People**
- 2,600 planning counter visits
- 40,723 external telephone calls
- 24,683 web page views
- 7,996 unique web page users
- 32 public engagement events

**Process**
- 28 SPART applications
- 5 SPART meetings
- 134 Planning Committee reports
- 21 Planning Committee meetings
- 122 CofA/Sign Variance reports
- 28 CofA/Sign Variance meetings
- 16 Advisory Panel meetings
- 1,038 Site visits/inspections
- 3 OMB Hearings

**Results**
- 70% of applications in settlement area
- 52% of applications in built boundary
- 523 approved residential lots/units
- 275 approved LTC beds
- 160 approved retirement rooms
- 78,712 trees planted
- 32,410 shrubs planted
- 5.18 ha limed
- 40 lakes sampled
- 232 shoreline home visits
Community and Strategic Planning

Greater Sudbury is changing. The continuing and emerging opportunities and challenges of the community require the City to make and implement plans, be it for an aging population, the revitalization of our urban areas or managing our modest growth, to name a few examples. Community and Strategic Planning (CSP) has a specialized understanding of our many geographies, be it physical or human, and advocates for a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning. CSP recognizes links between growth and integrated modes of transportation, the protection of our natural resources, and the protection of public health and property.

CSP has the many tools to play an integral role in helping the City define the future vision of the community. CSP continually monitors trends and provides long range planning and policy advice consistent with established strategic and community priorities. It undertakes strategic community planning projects such as official plan reviews, the downtown master plan and community improvement plans, each designed to bolster the quality of living and investment environment. CSP’s analyses and advice rests on a solid understanding of data. CSP’s Geographic Information Systems and Surveys/Mapping Group creates, maintains and analyses geographic base data, socioeconomic data, mapping, survey and aerial photography.
CSP continued to advance the first phase of the **Official Plan Review Program**. CSP prepared a comprehensive set of policy amendments and presented those amendments to Planning Committee in April. Following an additional round of community consultation in May and June, CSP adjusted the proposed policy amendments, which was presented to Planning Committee and the community earlier this year.

CSP led the comprehensive renewal of the **Downtown Sudbury Community Improvement Plan** designed to stimulate a new round of private sector investment in Downtown Sudbury. In December, City Council adopted the Plan and committed to providing funding for projects in 2017.

CSP also reviewed and updated the City’s **Policy on Development Cost Sharing** in consultation with the Development Liaison Advisory Committee. The revisions recognize the City’s interest to cost share in situations that close the infrastructure gap. They also provide flexibility to deal with unique situations and clarity and consistency in the application of the policy for more routine situations. The updated policy was approved in August. The first application under the new policy was approved in December.

CSP collaborated with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and others on the 2016 **Central Ontario Ortho-imagery Project (COOP)**, whose goal is to gather high-resolution images that can be used for a wide range of purposes including land use planning, emergency planning and asset management. As a result, the City now has complete ortho-photo coverage of our geography at a 1:20,000 scale.

CSP continued to collaborate with colleagues from across the organization to advance the City’s **Enterprise Geographic Information System (EGIS)**. CSP and IT led the drafting of a new EGIS Strategy. It maintained all core EGIS asset models (e.g. stormwater, wastewater and roads), which supports well-informed business decisions. CSP also worked closely with Fires and EMS Services to create an optimized plan to improve response times to citizens of Greater Sudbury.
Development Approvals and Engineering

Implementation is a big part of planning. Like other communities, Greater Sudbury’s land use planning approval process evolved over the years in response to the needs of the development community. We take a comprehensive approach to land use-planning approvals, from planning through to engineering and construction. We are accessible to the development community and work closely with them to realize good planning projects that positively contribute to the community.

Development Approvals and Engineering (DAE) is at the forefront of all of this work. DAE’s work begins at the idea stage. The DAE team pre-consults on a wide range of development proposals - from the construction of new garage to major commercial and residential developments. DAE leads the review and analysis of all land use planning applications and implements all land use planning decisions. DAE’s Development Engineering Group provides an integrated engineering perspective in the approval process and leads the implementation of site plans, plans of subdivision and plans of condominium. This group also ensures that utility infrastructure in the municipal right of way is compatible with existing and planned infrastructure. DAE’s Committee of Adjustment Group works with the public and developers on minor variances to the comprehensive Zoning By-law. Our Consent Official works with residents and investors to facilitate good lot creation, easements, rights of way, etc.
DAE led the implementation of a Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel recommendation, that is, to create the Sudbury Planning Application Review Team (SPART). SPART is designed to create greater upfront certainty and efficiency in the development approval process. Its members are drawn from a broad range of departments. SPART meets every two weeks with developers and investors that are planning to make a development application to the City. These meetings provide an opportunity to establish what will be required for a complete application. SPART first met in October. Between October and December 2016, it provided feedback on 28 pre-consultation files.

DAE also conducted a full review and update of the City’s Site Plan Control Guide in consultation with the Development Liaison Advisory Committee. The guide updates were completed in June. The updated guide will help developers in the site plan process by creating greater certainty, reducing application processing times and creating greater consistency in the decision making process.

DAE continued to review and analyze 360 land use-planning applications, including Official Plan Amendments, Rezonings, Subdivisions/Condos, Site Plans, Consents and Minor Variances. This included one industrial plan of subdivision, two residential plans of subdivision, four rezonings to accommodate our aging residential population, four urban infill projects and two urban adaptive reuse projects. This latter category includes the Brewer’s Loft project on Lorne Street, which proposes the adaptive reuse of the former Northern Breweries property into a 50 residential unit mixed use development at the edge of the downtown core.

DAE continued to work with the development community to implement planning approvals, including a 32-lot phase of the Corsi Hill residential subdivision and several site plan projects that are re-shaping the character of the Kingsway Corridor (i.e. Skater’s Edge, Micro Hotel, Diggs and Dwellings, Imperial Auto, Bianco’s, Party City, Wendy’s, and Hyundai).

top to bottom: Corsi Hill; Kingsway development; Northern Breweries
Environmental Planning Initiatives

Greater Sudbury has experienced a profound environmental transformation in the last few decades. Young, developing forests and recovering lakes, have replaced yesterday’s barren landscape of blackened hills and lifeless lakes. Having worked hard for this transformation to occur, many Sudburians value their natural environment and are keen on its protection.

The Environmental Planning Initiatives (EPI) Section includes the City’s award-winning Regreening Program, Lake Water Quality Program and EarthCare Sudbury Program, all with the overall focus of making Greater Sudbury a more resilient, sustainable and ecologically healthy place. Within Planning Services, EPI provides environmental planning input to municipal strategic plans (e.g., Official Plan) and individual development applications. EPI also enhances organization-wide collaboration by providing various environmentally related services to other City Divisions. Through its programs and initiatives, EPI works collaboratively with numerous community groups to continue to effect positive environmental change and to communicate the importance of sustainability to a broad public audience.
EPI planted over 100,000 tree and shrub seedlings on historically damaged lands, bringing the total seedlings planted to date to over 9.6 million since program inception in 1978. Much needed biological diversity was added to older planted areas through thousands of forest floor ‘mats’ freshly dug from healthy forests that would otherwise have been lost to scheduled developments. A large-scale monitoring project initiated in 2012 was continued again in 2016. This project will lead to a comprehensive assessment of our community’s ecological recovery. Over 15 kg of seeds and berries were collected to further regreening efforts in the future. EPI also partnered with a dozen businesses, organizations and educational institutions to deliver yet another successful Ugliest Schoolyard Contest.

EPI led the assessment of 232 properties and 38.7 kilometres of shoreline on Dixon, Frenchman, Joe, Hanmer and Richard Lakes through the Love Your Lake program. The City has been involved in this program as one of the first regional partners in 2013. Through this program the City has assessed more than 110 km of shoreline and over 1125 properties on a total on 12 lakes from 2013-2016.

EPI worked with Active Neighbourhoods Canada (ANC) on the Donovan Active Neighbourhood Pilot Program. EPI collected historical data, performed street audits, organized workshops, provided St. David School with an urban planning workshop, spoke with Donovan residents and developed and collected over 100 surveys. Using this information, ANC created a “portrait” document describing the culture, successes and challenges of the community.

EPI began to engage the community to develop the Greater Sudbury Food Strategy. This involved the collection of over 400 food surveys from various events and community partners. Six working groups have been formed to explore a variety of topics. This work will culminate in the creation of food strategy for the community in 2017.
Division initiatives

Last year, we took an opportunity to step back and take stock of what we were doing and where we were going. We took a team first approach. We built our leadership capacity, improved the way that we communicate, took the time to celebrate our successes and filled key positions to ensure that we continue to provide high quality services to the community.
Last year, we charted a new course for our team through our **2017-2022 Strategic Business Plan**, which will guide our actions as we strive to be the best planning department in Ontario. This Plan commits us to proactively leading positive change, strengthening our evidence-based decision making frameworks and furthering our reputation as innovators, collaborators, communicators and administrators. It also focuses on the team and getting it to the next level of performance. This Plan was shared with the community and City Council in April.

We advanced a **culture of leadership** within our team. We created a new leadership team consisting of managers and coordinators to collaborate and steer our efforts. We re-engaged with the City’s Talent Management System to better understand and grow our leadership competencies and improve alignment and accountability.

We continued to **engage the development community** through various conversations to better understand their perspectives, needs and aspirations. This included working with our partners in and outside of City Hall on the Gearing Up for Growth Advisory Panel, which recommended how to improve the development approval process to City Council in June.

We improved our **communication and collaboration** by regularly meeting with our colleagues that we work most frequently with and by continuing to dialogue with our community partners. We also improved how we communicate and collaborate as a team. We now meet quarterly to share information and successful practices. We also created a monthly lunch and learn series to explore contemporary planning topics.

We also took the time to **celebrate our successes**. Last year, six of our team members received WISE awards from colleagues in and outside of the team for their exemplary efforts. The range of awards given highlights our commitment to high standards, service and life-long learning.

Our team also saw considerable **change**. We welcomed a new General Manager, marked the passing of one friend and colleague, celebrated the retirement of another two friends and colleagues, and welcomed 4 new people to the team on a permanent basis.
Conclusion

2017 promises to be a busy and exciting year for the Planning Services Division! Numerous projects are underway that are aligned with City Council’s change agenda, the Official Plan, and our 5-Year Strategic Business Plan. We look forward to working with City Council, our colleagues and partners on these projects and to providing future updates on our progress through the annual budget, corporate reports and divisional reports.