

Response to Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce 2018 Municipal Election Platform
Patricia Mills

Thank you for inviting this response from my campaign for Mayor.

I have carefully reviewed the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce Election 2018 Platform. For the most part, I can say that I endorse the spirit and intent of the document. Yes, investment in the community is important. Yes, we need to support business expansion and development. Yes, we need to look carefully at how to attract the next generation of workers and citizens.

However, I have some real concerns, not about your platform, but how many of these important elements have been managed and implemented by the current Mayor.

On the big projects, spending, taxation, economic development, infrastructure and building a skilled workforce here, in brief, is my position. I would be pleased to discuss this further.

From the start of this Mayoral campaign, I have said that the main issues are leadership and transparency. Since the last election, our city has embarked on a series of “big projects”. These projects were brought forward by dynamic, energetic and committed people from within our community. In each case, the Mayor has stepped in to reshape that vision to his own liking and to the detriment of the community.

Originally envisioned as a private-public partnership, the Kingsway Entertainment District is now arbitrarily being fully-funded by the city through borrowing. The community was not given the opportunity to consider the other options being proposed.

The Junction does not even closely resemble the recommendation of a group of volunteer citizens who have worked for many years to create a unique performing arts and convention vision. That was again a top-down decision.

As Mayor, I would not act without consultation, disregard the hard work and ideas of our citizens, and move forward with an alternate agenda. Instead, I would look more closely at private-public partnerships, rather than arbitrarily deciding to borrow \$300 million on the backs of taxpayers to go it alone. I will not commit our taxpayers to a legacy of debt.

It's time to stop the madness in spending and get back to ensuring we do the basics like roads and water, and investments in the future in a manner that we can afford. Our infrastructure deficit is large and looming. Yet, we need to hold the line on taxes. This will require good working relationships with senior levels of government and a planned and methodical approach to restoring our basic infrastructure.

In addition, we need to ensure that we benchmark and enforce standards for road, water, sewer and other infrastructure projects so they are completed right the first time. The work needs to be coordinated to minimize cost and disruption. How often have we seen a stretch of road dug up several times for several different reasons? There must be a better way to plan and coordinate this work. And why do we not have construction and remediation of major arteries on a 24-hour schedule? After all, from its very founding Sudbury's workforce has been on 24 hour shift work.

We need to redouble our efforts in economic development in a manner that is open to, encourages and nurtures new ideas, entrepreneurs and existing businesses to invest, employ, grow, and thrive.

This will be accomplished by giving our dedicated economic development professionals along with motivated and leading citizens the autonomy and freedom to seek new opportunities.

And we need to leverage our beautiful community, our educational, medical and recreational assets to attract the skilled workforce that is so necessary for our businesses to compete.

In summary, I would make it a priority to listen and consult in an open and honest manner with the people of Greater Sudbury and work with our communities to establish our priorities for spending and investments.

As Mayor I promise to fulfill my ROI: Respect for tax dollars and citizen wishes; Openness in leadership and communication; and the Integrity to report back progress or lack thereof as we move forward.