

**MAYOR STEPHEN MANDEL'S SWEARING-IN  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2010  
1:30 P.M. – CITY HALL**

***CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY***

**[Introduction and congratulations]**

Justice Manderscheid.

Friends, family and supporters.

Thank you all for being here today, to witness the beginning of this new term, and to lend support to your City Council as the job of this term begins.

We all can tell you that this is the moment in which the weight of all that's been said and promised during the campaign is most clearly felt.

There is pride and honour in this moment - but also humility. This is a daunting view.....as we stand here, swear our vows, and begin to contemplate all we must do in the next three years.

This is an energizing point which, helped by the presence of our friends and loved ones, makes us realize that every wish in our City is for us, collectively, to find solutions and to succeed.

It is in this measure that I bid a special welcome to our two new Councillors today – Councillors Loken and Diotte. We all look forward what your ideas and enthusiasm will bring to our efforts in this term.

And as Mayor, I am also pleased to welcome back my returning colleagues – each of you successful in earning the confidence of our citizens once more.

I congratulate you all on your hard fought success.

**[what the result means]**

The challenge of any new Council is to interpret the collective messages of the voters and to implement the program they have endorsed. We must show we are interpreting well.

I believe this campaign sent some very clear messages.....

Between choosing to move forward or pulling back the reigns.....and the clear decision, in all parts of our city was to move forward!

This election was about building a positive future for Edmonton.

It embraced long-term thinking and a broad vision of an ambitious Edmonton.

It sent a clear message that investing in our core infrastructure, our neighbourhoods and roads, community centres and libraries is no longer something we are willing to compromise. We must keep pace.

It said clearly that Edmonton wants to be an even more sustainable city – one that revitalizes core communities and links all parts of our City through LRT.

That we want to be a bold city – one that sees EXPO as a chance to support our primary goals of sustainability and transformation, and to show a new vision of our City and Province to the world.

And that we want to be a safe, compassionate and inclusive City – one which deals with the very real problems of homelessness and marginalization in our community and one which celebrates diversity and embraces new voices and new perspectives.

We heard clearly that we are ready to move past old debates to the issues of today and tomorrow.

And our citizens told us that they want a city that actively creates a foundation for the success of the next generation.

We have also received very clear messages about accountability, messages we must honour.

By choosing plans that are paced reasonably and affordably.

By understanding that our next generation Edmonton will also be home to a growing senior community that needs security of place and voice in our changing city.

By ensuring that our City, as it moves an ambitious agenda forward, can and must find more active, more modern, more responsive and much more effective ways to hear and respond to the voices of our citizens.

And as we do, it must be with equal parts respect and compassion to those worried about impacts that change will bring.

It is also for us to remember –everyday - that those voices who gave us the privilege of this position are not the only ones we are required to hear.

### **What's next:**

So if the messages are clear, so too is it clear that we have only a short time in which to reflect upon them.

Our work starts immediately and our agenda is very full.

### **Budget and capital financing**

It starts with budget and the ever-present challenge of delivering services in an environment that demands we do more with less.

The price of our ability to be long-term investors in a bold future is, as always, made possible through the hard work applied today.

It comes from working with our administration and our unions to ensure our budget vision rests on practicality, affordability and respect for the pocket books of our citizens.

We must apply the same level of decisiveness and creativity to our internal view as we have to crafting our long-term vision for Edmonton.

This same level of creativity will have to be found as we move forward on our capital budget items, like LRT.

We will hear soon from the Province on funding for our NAIT line and we need to know quickly where we stand on funding for the next phases of our system.

And as we look towards the goal of connecting all corners of our city, a smart and innovative funding model for our southeast LRT is front of mind.

We need to choose a path and timeline for expansion that lines up with known resources – using existing resources first and not just assume that the solution will lie in higher taxes.

And we must work effectively with our communities to ensure we have desired impacts.

### **Council initiatives:**

Councillors will continue to be share the leadership role in ways that stretch across our City. Councillor initiatives have been a cornerstone of a new leadership approach and I look forward to meeting with each and every one of my colleagues to see how we can move our City's agenda forward – together.

And there are some important areas that will require our attention.

### **On Consultation and Communication**

Looking ahead to some of the major projects entering the consultation stage - the arena, LRT design and EXPO 2017 - it's clear that we need to refine our consultation process and vastly improve how we communicate with our citizens.

Methods are changing, people contribute their opinions and receive information in different ways, and we are not keeping pace.

A City with a bold creative vision has to be able to communicate clearly with its citizens – we simply must do better here.

And from better process will come better solutions – ones where our citizens can witness their impacts and know that together we've all done the best for Edmonton.

### **City Centre Development**

Edmontonians have told us they support our decision to move forward with developing the City Centre Lands, but it is clear that we have not done our job in terms of communicating what the new vision will be and how we will work with the community to pace development.

How we go about involving Edmontonians in the process of shaping this community for the benefit of the city as a whole will be a critical factor in its success.

This project represents one of the greatest opportunities any city could have to transform its centre.

It must be a model of urban sustainability, setting new standards in innovation, and in the creation of community, family-oriented housing, green housing and infrastructure – and supportive industry that can help to bring these things forward.

And it must pay returns to our citizens over the long term.

We have promised big things here and Edmontonians are counting on us to get it right.

### **Safety/Homelessness**

For our long term plans, like our plans to address community safety and homelessness, it will be vital to continue our support of existing efforts.

We need to build on growing community partnerships but also strike a better and wider balance.

We must be respectful of all our communities and be innovative when working together to develop a broader vision of what all of our future communities will look like.

### **Community sustainability**

When it comes to building sustainable, strong communities, we need to look at how we can pull together more effective partnerships with communities, parents, schools, and the Province.

And going forward, we see made-in-the-community solutions as the way to implementing the broad vision of a city made up of sustainable communities.

United, and working closely together with partners and citizens to understand issues, share resources, and break down boundaries, we will make our city greater, starting from the core.

But it is not just a core message – Edmonton and its region need to continue to work more effectively at our outer edges as well.

To find better balance between development and sustainability, to ensure city resources, like LRT and community structures are accessible to all, and that fair partnerships with our regional neighbours continue to move forward and show their impact in positive ways.

### **Economic development**

And just as we can plan together, so too can we look towards a smarter and broader economic vision for our region's future and it can only be accomplished by better cultivating the efforts now underway in among our grassroots entrepreneurs.

I, along with the Mayors of four of our neighbours: St. Albert, Leduc, Strathcona County, and Spruce Grove, recently commissioned a report on economic development.

The report, drafted by private sector entrepreneurs, spells out the need to build on grassroots efforts to expand economic development in the region and to provide better mentorship and direction to our innovators so they can succeed here.

We are fortunate to have rich opportunities here – the innovation coming out of our post-secondary institutions, our rapidly growing knowledge-based workforce, and of course our proximity to the Oilsands.

But to create long-term, sustainable opportunities for our future, we need to do more than capitalize on our current opportunities.

To do this, we can look at building on our core resource strength and to focus more on our most promising regional growth areas, like agrifood, advanced technology, green industries, and medical devices.

We must tune in, as community and business leaders have already, to the reality that the time is now to anticipate and build the future success of our city.

### **Arts and Culture**

Over the past 6 years, we have seen great contributions to arts and culture in the City of Edmonton. From our magnificent new Art Gallery to Canada's newest literary magazine *Eighteen Bridges*, to even the smallest dance troupe, Edmonton is home to an abundance of amazing talent and truly innovative projects.

We must continue to support and enhance opportunities for those artists and industries that make up our thriving arts community.

Embracing creativity makes our city more vibrant, more livable, and opens up opportunities for cultural and economic growth.

### **Seniors**

And just as it is time to respond to the opportunities that await us, it is also time to listen to those who have led us here and be responsive to their needs.

Our growing senior community is facing increasing challenges and we need to be prepared to respond to their needs – affordable and accessible housing in particular.

This is an issue that requires the City to strive even harder as we work with our partners, the Province, the Greater Edmonton Foundation, and private and non-profit developers.

We have seen increasing requests for operating and capital funds as this community grows. We need to be innovative in structure and programming, and we need to be a fully active partner in all aspects of addressing the challenges that face our aging population.

This needs to be a broader initiative, and it will require us to develop the City's relationships with our seniors more effectively.

I think one of our first steps towards this end will be to appoint an Ombudsman for seniors – a go-to resource that will act as an advocate and liaison between our seniors and our City Administration and Council.

## **Conclusion**

These are but a few of the challenges we will face this term. It is an agenda that reflects the diversity of the city we serve.

We have been entrusted by our citizens to listen to their needs and to make the right decisions in the years ahead – decisions that will make Edmonton stronger for the long-term.

Edmontonians have made a positive, forward-thinking choice for their City - one that reflects both incredible confidence and incredible expectation.

And as we stand here today we are humbled by their choice but strengthened by the confidence they have shown in our ability to carry their expectations and to deliver – we know by keeping these constantly in our minds we will succeed.

We are grateful for the opportunity and the trust.

Thank you all for your support and faith in us.