



**Ecology Ottawa Annual Dinner
Address by Mayor Jim Watson
November 10, 2011**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you this evening.

It's my pleasure to be here today to talk directly with people who are volunteering their time to make Ottawa a cleaner, greener and better place to live.

C'est un plaisir pour moi d'être ici aujourd'hui et de m'adresser directement aux personnes qui offrent généreusement leur temps pour faire d'Ottawa une ville plus propre, plus verte et où il fait bon vivre.

I would like to recognize Councillor David Chernushenko who is with us this evening.

David is a smart leader on the sustainability file at City Hall, so I was quite honoured to hear him call our draft budget the 'greenest one he's seen yet....'

And over the next few weeks we will continue to hear from the public and council deliberate the budget on November 30.

Ecology Ottawa put forward a thoughtful and comprehensive pre-budget submission - thank you.

I hope you will agree that this budget moves on many of your priorities, to see Ottawa on track towards a truly sustainable future.

We may not be able to do everything we want in one budget, but we will continue to undertake improvements in a way that is both environmentally and financially sustainable.

I want to take some of our time here this evening to describe some of the action we're taking at City hall that will make us greener immediately and will also position us for the future.

A good city works to make sure that are a mix of active mobility options so you can get where you need to go, quickly and safely – when you need to go.

As we all know, transportation emissions are the fastest growing portion of our green house gas problem.

We fight that with better planning that integrates cycling and walking into communities from the start.

We fight that by saying no to uncontrolled urban sprawl.

We fight that by providing public transit that is convenient, affordable and comfortable.

Nobody wants a community where we have to burn a litre of gas in the car to get a litre of milk at the store.

Public transit is key to the environmental health of any major municipality.

It is our circulatory system and we can't tolerate interruption for long.

That is why we worked hard this year to ensure we didn't have to deal with another painful winter strike and we signed a fair collective agreement with our union.

Our public transit dollars have to go far.

Le transport en commun est indispensable à la santé environnementale de toute grande municipalité.

Nous ne pouvons tolérer une longue interruption de notre réseau de circulation.

Voilà pourquoi nous avons travaillé fort cette année pour nous assurer de ne pas avoir à faire face à une nouvelle grève pénible en hiver.

Les fonds que nous consacrons au transport en commun doivent être utilisés judicieusement.

That is why we had to introduce our network optimization last year, to get rid of wasteful routings.

Good public transit is structured to strive for more and more efficiency.

It must, because we need our ridership on public transit to grow.

And it is growing.

I'm happy to say that transit ridership in Ottawa is up 6% this year over last year.

The September 2012 numbers are 5.6% higher than they were in September of 2011 alone.

That is good news and we want to keep it up.

Budget 2012 boosts funding for OC Transpo by \$5.5 million.

There is a \$3.2 million increase in service to deal with growth in ridership and a targeted \$2.3 million to expand capacity on routes like the 87, 94, 95 and 96.

More trips and more high-capacity buses will be added to these busy routes.

Throughout the coming year we will be adding some 66,000 service hours to address growing demands on our system.

This increased service will begin by January 1st of 2012.

Au cours de la prochaine année, nous ajouterons quelque 66 000 heures de service de plus pour satisfaire la demande croissante sur notre réseau.

Ces services supplémentaires seront offerts dès le 1^{er} janvier 2012.

And, our new double-decker bus fleet will begin to arrive later in 2012, adding further high-capacity service.

Work will also begin so that frequency and capacity of the O-Train can double almost 10 years ahead of schedule in 2014 as the new trains we purchased to serve the north-south route take their place on the line.

Council also acted in 2011 to get light rail back on track.

This project is vital to our plans to step up public transit in Ottawa.

It will eliminate the bottleneck in transit we now face in the downtown core.

The long lines of bumper-to-bumper busses that crowd through the core have reached their limit now.

Adding more busses doesn't actually increase capacity - it just serves to slow down everyone.

So we're investing some \$2.1 billion in fixing that with a new modern, high capacity rail system that will be completely separated from traffic tie ups.

As we prepare for the construction of light rail we need to make sure that our existing transportation infrastructure is up to date and ready to handle the demands that will be placed on it throughout construction.

We need to take care of the roads we have before we expand.

Let's maintain our infrastructure well now, so we can be prudent with money and prudent with growth.

Commençons dès maintenant à bien entretenir nos infrastructures, afin de pouvoir faire preuve de prudence dans notre gestion des fonds et de la croissance.

That's a key part of why Budget 2012 introduces Ottawa on the Move.

Ottawa on the Move accelerates the planned transportation infrastructure projects – many of which were planned as far as five years out.

We're repairing and improving.

And as we fix up roads it gives us a big opportunity to improve cycling and walking in our city.

Building on last year's budget's push in this direction, through its resurfacing program, Ottawa on the Move will see the construction of more than 70 km of new bike lanes and paved shoulders. It will also fund 20 km in existing sidewalk improvements and repairs.

There is no point in creating cycling paths in isolation from one another.

They need to be part of a network so you can set out to get from where you are to where you need to be with confidence.

Ottawa on the Move will see to it that this network is built, and built quickly.

We will be working hard to fill the gaps in our cycling network to improve interconnections and safety so you can get where you are going by bike.

Off-road pathways near the Aviation Museum, through Hampton Park, along the O-Train corridor from Carling to the Ottawa River, and extending the Sawmill Creek path from Walkley to Brookfield, will all be completed this term of Council.

We will put in place a 12 kilometre East-West Bikeway over the next three years to provide safer and more comfortable commutes.

Work on the design to implement a pedestrian bridge over the Rideau from Donald to Somerset will also get underway this year.

In total, Budget 2012 provides an additional \$12.1 million over three years for cycling infrastructure.

This funding is on top of the \$8 million over four years provided in Budget 2011, and does not include an additional estimated \$6 million in new bike lanes and paved shoulders that will be done through Ottawa on the Moves' road renewal program.

In total, this term of Council will provide the largest financial commitment ever put towards building our cycling city – over \$26 million, a new record.

Au total, pendant ce mandat, le Conseil va fournir l'engagement financier le plus important jamais mis de l'avant pour construire une ville cyclable – plus de \$26 million.

We have heard you loud and clear: Ottawa needs accessible, affordable and sustainable transportation options that encourage residents to choose a green commute.

I believe that our Ottawa on the Move plan is a significant step towards that reality.

Sustainable Ottawa

A green community isn't just about transportation infrastructure.

That is why, again this year, the City is doing its part by moving ahead with green technology in both our buildings and our fleet of vehicles.

For example we are investing in our ice rinks to replace aging cooling systems with more energy-efficient refrigeration technology.

Through our green fleet program we're buying electric ice-resurfacing machines to get rid of the engine exhaust and improve the air quality for the parents and children who play in our rinks.

Budget 2012 devotes \$3 million in the coming year to green building retrofits and \$500,000 a year to expanding our green fleet program.

So far our Smart Energy initiatives have achieved annual savings of \$800,000 each year, by retrofitting City facilities with lighting upgrades, controls for heating, ventilation and air conditioning, reducing our water consumption, as well as converting from electric, oil and propane to natural gas.

Budget 2012 commits \$750,000 in capital support and \$150,000 in additional operating funds to implement projects that make Ottawa green.

As part of this, to help build a greener, more ecologically robust City:

- \$100,000 will be committed to redesigning three public spaces to show green design and practices, one urban, one suburban and one rural property;
- Launching a pilot waste reduction project with the NCC to offer access to our organics program at major events like Winterlude and Canada Day.
- The Community Environmental Grant Program will be expanded to help increase the ability of the community to undertake small-scale initiatives;
- The City will work with partners to seed the development of an Ottawa Land Trust that would use conservation easements and fundraise for acquisitions of high conservation value land;
- Putting in place a green roof program through education and building towards development of a green roof bylaw for large low-rise institutional, commercial, and industrial buildings;
- Piloting water efficiency measures at the Britannia wading pool;
- Committing \$20,000 to assist with implementation of water-efficiency measures at City splash pads where they are supplied by wells in rural areas so we can expand water recreation opportunities in these areas;
- Conducting a green design competition between developers on a designated piece of land.

The winning developer would then construct the project.

Budget 2012 put down some important markers on greener buildings.

This year we will create a powerful incentive to undertake more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable building – the Green Express Lane.

Those who strive for more...

- Who maximize energy efficiency;
- Set the bar higher on water conservation;
- Incorporate reused materials;
- Minimize waste from construction and demolition; and
- Work to reduce strain on our roadways by being close to transit...

...will be provided with a more direct and accelerated permitting process.

We will examine and pre-approve the new *better build* techniques to which we want to give priority and we will support them.

We will set a tough standard for housing, buildings and renovations to qualify for a new Green Express Lane.

Nous allons examiner et préapprouver les nouvelles techniques Better Build auxquelles nous voulons accorder la priorité et que nous voulons appuyer.

Nous allons établir une norme stricte pour les logements, les immeubles et les projets de rénovation qui veulent se qualifier pour la Voie verte expresse.

Builders and homeowners who include these *better build* techniques such as solar hot water heaters, photovoltaic systems, storm and gray water re-use systems will not face barriers as has been the case in the past – they will instead get express lane service.

We will also add to the Environmentally Sensitive Land Fund we created last year, dedicated to making sure we have the resources to buy and protect key parcels of land.

Already there is \$4.4 million in the fund and we will add approximately \$1.4 million this year.

We will continue to work at reducing the household and commercial waste produced in Ottawa.

As you know waste is a major source of greenhouse gasses.

Any landfill creates methane, a powerful global warming gas.

The trucks that long-haul the majority of commercial waste generated in Ottawa to the United States produce emissions as well.

Under Maria McRae's leadership we are making progress at increasing diversion and reducing our reliance on landfill.

We are expanding the scope of our efforts to divert material and reuse, recycle and recover waste to highest and best use.

Nous allons élargir la portée de nos efforts pour détourner le matériel et optimiser la réutilisation, le recyclage et la récupération des déchets.

Next year we will save money and increase our diversion rates as we move to weekly green bin pick-up year-round.

To make sure we at the city continue to mind our own performance and do even more to lead by example, Budget 2012 provides \$25,000 to increase waste diversion at municipal facilities, including expanded access to the Green Bin program.

We are also following through with the next phase of the Ottawa River Action Plan.

That work will be done in conjunction with Ottawa on the Move.

Nous ferons un suivi de la première phase du Plan d'action de la rivière des Outaouais, et ce, conjointement avec l'initiative Ottawa, on se déplace.

We are now seeking funding from our federal and provincial partners so we can complete work the work of fixing the problem of combined sewer overflows.

One point I know people have been noticing is the lack of tree cover we're seeing put in the suburbs.

The reason for this is a decision by Council last term to stop tree planting in new subdivisions.

The answer is not to stop planting trees on residential streets over vast parts of our city.

This year we are committed to getting an answer to the situation we're in with trees not being planted through large portions of the city where Leda clay prevails.

We will provide some ingenuity and common sense to get back to tree lined streets in the suburbs.

I want to end by specifically addressing our desire to take up the full benefit of Ontario's forward-looking feed-in tariff.

As some of you know we've had a problem here in Ottawa gaining the full benefit of the program, but that is about to change.

Up until now a limit at the Hydro One facility on Hawthorne has made it impossible to connect major new green energy generation to the grid here in Ottawa.

Some smaller generation has been able to move ahead.

But nothing large was approved here because the equipment at the one Hydro One Transmission station couldn't take it.

Early in this year I wrote to Laura Formosa, President and CEO of Hydro One to ask her to personally assure me this would be fixed.

Now it is a major upgrade to our grid so it can't happen over night, but I am pleased to tell you that I have received a commitment to fix this limitation and that the Hawthorne problem is on the list for work next year.

Home owners can move now, but by 2013 we should have an open field to make more progress on larger green electricity projects.

I will be looking to the province to see that we secure an allocation for this city going forward that reflects the grid limits we've laboured under here in Ottawa, limits caused by Hydro One's infrastructure.

With the future of the Feed-in Tariff in better focus and the provincial election behind us, I am confident we can get activity going in Ottawa.

Algonquin College just announced a major expansion in Ottawa focused on building the skills of green technology and building techniques.

If we have the will to really push over the next few years, we can make a dramatic difference.

Si nous voulons vraiment aller de l'avant au cours des prochaines années, nous pouvons faire une grande différence.

Working together for a better Ottawa

Thank you again for providing me this opportunity to give you an overview of the key environmental and sustainability measures at the City.

I am also grateful for your organization's continued involvement in the pre-budget process – dedicated volunteers such as yourselves are a vital part of building a community that reflects the priorities and values of its residents.

I am proud of our track record on green issues:

- Record money for cycling
- 1st downtown segregated bike lane
- Creation of an environmentally sensitive land reserve fund
- Solar panels on city buildings, including city hall

- Expansion of recycling opportunities
- Stand alone Environment Committee

And all this in just 10 months in office.

I look forward to continuing to work with you to make Ottawa a greener, more sustainable, and better place to live.

Je me réjouis à l'idée de continuer à travailler avec vous pour faire d'Ottawa une ville plus propre, plus viable et où il fait bon vivre.