



MAYOR SAM KATZ

2011 STATE OF THE CITY OUTLINE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2011

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Good afternoon. It is a pleasure to join you for the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce's Annual State of the City Address. This is consistently the Chamber's biggest event of the year.

While it is great to have such a big turnout, I look at it a bit differently. I look out at this room packed with people and I'm pleased to be Mayor where so many citizens take an interest in their city and want to play an active role in the state of our city, our community. The interest by the people and business and community sectors represented in this room is very gratifying.

We need to build more of this participation right across this city not just on State of the City day, but every day. Thank you all for coming. 50% of the net proceeds from this event will benefit the North End Hockey Program and Osborne House. It's also very heart warming to see two very deserving community organizations get some much needed additional support for their work.

I'd like to welcome Barbara Judt, Executive Director of Osborne House – an organization that continues to have a positive impact for the women and children who live with domestic violence in their lives.

And welcome to Tammy Christensen, Executive Director of Ndinawe who administer the North End Hockey Program – a great opportunity to engage children, youth and their families in the North End.

I want to thank the Chamber and everyone here for making this support possible again this year.

However, I do have to say that the size of this year's crowd does concern me a bit. On the way in I overheard a conversation between a few people who were

scurrying out the door with very disappointed looks on their faces. Apparently they thought they were coming to another event taking place at the Convention Centre today - the launch of *Winnipeg's Annual Taboo Show, Naughty but Nice*.

This year's address comes on the heels of the civic election.

Elections, more than any other time in the political process, give every person the chance for their voice to be heard. Together the people speak and the majority decides whose vision for the future is the best.

On October 27, 2010, I was both humbled and honoured to accept the offer of the people of Winnipeg to serve as Mayor for a third term.

We heard directly from the people that their priorities for the future were reducing crime, continuing to invest in our communities, offering our young people positive alternatives, and growing new business and seizing opportunity in our city.

The people have spoken and it's time to put the election talk behind us and work on implementing plans and actions and making choices that will carry out our vision.

Joining me in sharing the responsibility for carrying out the voice of the people is a very diverse, dynamic and talented group of individuals. The 16 of us, together with our city's Public Service, will work to take up the challenge of making the often-difficult decisions that guide, shape and affect the lives of over 670,000 of our citizens.

I would like you to join me in welcoming them, and showing your appreciation for those who choose to serve in public office and represent their fellow citizens.

Councillors I would like to ask that you stand as I call your name. I will start with our new councillors. I would ask the audience to hold their applause until I have called upon all four.

Brand new councillors

Ross Eadie
Paula Havixbeck
Devi Sharma, and
Thomas Steen

And now our returning councillors

Jeff Browaty
Scott Fielding
Jenny Gerbasi
Grant Nordman
John Orlikow
Mike Pagtakhan
Harvey Smith
Gord Steeves
Justin Swandel
Dan Vandal, and
Russ Wyatt

Ladies and gentleman even though we have disagreements from time to time and vote in different ways...I can assure you that we all try and come together for the good of Winnipeg and our citizens even though we have differing ideas on how best to achieve success.

I look forward to working with all of you as we move forward on building a safer and vibrant city.

This decade will be a defining period in our city's history. Events in every corner of the world around us will continue to redefine and reshape the way we live and work.

We will have to react and adapt to these changes and be ahead of the curve to ensure that we are riding the wave of change and not getting swamped by it.

To date, with a lot of hard work, Winnipeg has largely done that. We have held our own and even made some economic gains while whole industries have disappeared in other North American cities. As a result, hundreds of thousands of jobs were lost, and many families were faced with losing their homes.

Even in that harsh environment, Winnipeg was still able to increase its population by over 18,000 over the last two years. And with that renewed population growth, additional housing is needed. The City's housing starts were at the highest level since the end of the 1980s – that's 20 years ago. In fact, they increased by 65% from last year alone.

Last year, the City's building permit value increased to over \$1.1 billion dollars.

And there's good news for the Winnipeg homeowner - your home value is 150% more than it was a decade ago. And we still have among the most affordable homes of any large Canadian city.

I love this city.

In how many other cities can a baker's son born into a struggling immigrant family have an opportunity to grow up to be the Mayor of the same city that first welcomed his parents here to begin a new life.

The opportunity to be almost anything you choose in our society still amazes me. It is a story that many of us can tell. Each generation worked hard and sacrificed so that the next one could have a better life. We have to keep on

working hard and making choices and sacrifices just like our parents did for us if we want to pass on a better future to our children.

We will do what we've always done. We'll work together and meet the challenge.

As the great Theodore Roosevelt once said, "*What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for our communities lives long after we are gone.*"

For Winnipeg, this decade will be one of great promise and great challenges. Which will be the road that defines Winnipeg for the future? Will we think the challenges of attaining our goals are simply too difficult in turbulent times? Should that stop us from trying? Should that make us reassess our goals and set less loftier goals? You know what I say? "Absolutely not!"

I whole-heartedly say Yes, let's be realistic. Yes, let's be practical. Yes, let's be financially responsible. However, let's not do that at the expense of daring to dream and believing that we can be more.

To quote the poet Browning, "a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

Sometimes I think that somewhere along the line over the years we sort of forgot who we are as Winnipeggers. For a while I believe we settled into wearing the mantle of people living in a great city, but maybe just not quite as great as other cities.

You know what? I don't want Winnipeggers to settle for second best. Winnipeg is poised to have the look, the feel and energy of a truly great city ... One that can hold the promise, opportunity and luster that will draw people here ... that will keep our kids in Winnipeg and have a great life here.

The kind of city we can all take pride in, when this past November Winnipeg earned 1st place among 12 Canadian cities judged as the best places to invest.

For the first time in 20 years, we will see a new residential high-rise in our downtown skyline, thanks to a \$45 million dollar investment from Crystal Developers.

We've seen more than 500 new residential units completed or under construction in and around the Exchange District last year, including eight historic buildings undergoing loft conversions. Our downtown population will increase by more than 10%.

To quote local architect Brett Bellamy in a recent article "*At a time when much of the continent was mired in recession, this should be celebrated.*"

I also wonder how many more new buildings will be on the skyline considering the Downtown Residential Development Grant program has approved \$7 million in grants for residential projects. Plus another \$12 million in funds are expected to be approved in 2011, bringing a total number of 800 new units to the downtown.

And who knows what other exciting businesses might be drawn here as a result of Economic Development Winnipeg and the Chamber of Commerce's recently launched "Yes Winnipeg". You know you are on the right track when the private sector raises \$4 million of the \$6 million through this group. I want to commend Charlie Spiring for leading this impressive campaign and for reaching their goal of raising \$6 million dollars in just 6 months.

Charlie, you know the city is out there looking for a new CAO, right?

With the new IKEA and Target stores soon to be here, we will create a fresh new emphasis, defining Winnipeg as a shopping destination. Visitors will be drawn to come here instead of spending their money south of the border or in other Canadian cities.

...as visitors park at IKEA perhaps they will see a lot of Midwestern American transport trucks, brought here by the vision of CentrePort, heading north to the airport to unload cargo bound for the world.

CentrePort has the ability to have a major economic impact and create phenomenal job opportunities. To achieve this, - CentrePort must focus on 3 key pillars – 1 - private sector investment must drive this vision, 2 - a single authority like the Winnipeg Airport Authority, and 3 - single jurisdiction – just one government – because by providing the tools necessary and producing a climate for private business to thrive, we empower CentrePort to find success.

While visitors are in the city shopping, they will not want to miss taking the kids to the absolutely must-see Assiniboine Park and Zoo. The Nature and Adventure Playground and expanded Duck Pond and Plaza will be ready for opening this Spring. The new toboggan hill and skating rink have become the place to go for outdoor fun.

How excited they are going to be to walk in the footsteps of Louis Riel and history itself at the Upper Fort Garry Park and then cross the street and visit the place the world is talking about ... the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the largest green building ever built in Manitoba will be a beacon for visitors from around the world to come together to share in a commitment to human rights.

A stop along the tour will be to see Western Canada's first skyscraper, the Union Bank Tower, recently renewed by Red River College and CentreVenture with help from the city.

The redeveloped Avenue Building on Portage Avenue will still be a shining star on Portage Avenue but it will have growing competition thanks to the Portage Avenue Development Strategy. We need more people living downtown and breathing life into the heart of our city long after the storefronts close, and this project plays a large role in making this happen. We are excited to work with Ross McGowan and everyone at CentreVenture as we create an action plan to focus development on Portage Avenue – one that will bring increased density and pedestrian traffic to support the retail district and the MTS Centre, Portage Place, The Bay, the University of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Convention Centre.

Putting the strategy into play in the future, not only will visitors and citizens come to Portage Avenue to see some the Manitoba Moose and some of the biggest names in showbiz play at the MTS Centre, - one of the busiest venues in North America, I might add - they will be drawn to Portage because of its growing reputation as a lively Sports and Entertainment District.

And our citizens and visitors will enjoy a safer City. When visitors ask who those people are in the blue uniforms, as a proud Winnipegger, we will say they are our police cadets. And there will be 200 of them out on our streets and they've been a welcome part of life in Winnipeg since December 2010.

Two cadets are here today. I would like Kim Schmeichel and Sheldon Pilkington to stand and be recognized. I will be seeing them later today when the first class of cadets officially graduate.

And when we talk about safety, we need to recognize our emergency service providers.

Thanks to the hard working men and women of the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service, Winnipeg has among the best emergency response times. To continue to provide our citizens with quality emergency services, we are building four new stations to address the needs of our growing city.

With all the things I mentioned earlier, if you can see and do all that in Winnipeg, you might as well book your next convention at the newly expanded Winnipeg Convention Centre, where the facilities are top-notch and your dollars go further than in most other cities.

And won't it be great when Canada gathers together in Winnipeg for the 2014 Grey Cup in our new state-of-the-art football stadium.

And when the stadium opens, the area vacated by the old stadium land will be reinvented into an absolutely exciting new venture that could see more high density residential development, and more shopping destinations and hotels.

And who wouldn't love to take the family to that awesome new waterpark with the wave pool, a lazy river, and waterslides that you just have to try because everyone's saying how it's the best anywhere.

And to finish painting the picture of the new Winnipeg, we have to look at our city from a new angle ... take a bird's eye view of it perhaps! Because whirling high overhead, is a big, shiny, crime-busting new police helicopter, which I am pleased to say is operational this week, - protecting our children, families and visitors alike who are enjoying a day or night in our thriving, modern city.

Ladies and Gentlemen, that I believe is a vibrant, prosperous city alive with excitement, promise and hope. That is the face of a city that changes visitors' perspectives of who we are and defines our city, which makes us a modern city that people strive to visit ... a community our young can't bear to leave behind, that makes visitors think, "Gee, I kinda wish I lived there."

We may not get there by the next city budget or get it all done by the budget after that ... and certainly it will take the collective will of all levels of government, the private sector and the fullest possible community involvement to make it all happen, but we will get it done if we all pull hard enough in the same direction. And certainly we will never get it done if we ever stop believing it can happen. Because it can and will.

As we work toward creating that future Winnipeg, I believe that in the present Winnipeggers deserve, law and order. Supporting those who fight crime and seek justice will always be a fundamental plank of my vision for this city.

To be a truly great city, we all need to feel safe. We need to feel our property is protected. Whether a crime happens in the neighbourhood you live or in someone else's, it matters to us all because it affects how the world sees Winnipeg.

I don't think for a minute that there is anyone in this room who does not believe that every Winnipegger should have the right to be able to walk on our streets, play in our yards and go to sleep at night feeling safe regardless of whether you live in the North End or in Charleswood.

After many discussions with the chief of police, members of the Winnipeg Police association, community leaders, and citizens who have been victims of crime, it

was clear that we needed more police dedicated to fighting gangs, and more feet on the street to make a permanent difference.

That's why one of the first items for business was to hire an additional 58 new police officers.

- 20 officers are dedicated to fighting gangs, in a unit modeled after the highly successful auto theft strategy. In short we want to do to gangs what we have accomplished with the auto theft unit. Wouldn't we all love to see a 74% decrease in crime?
- 20 officers will be on foot patrol in high risk areas, and
- The final 18 will allow us to put an extra cruiser car on our city streets 24-7 each and every day.

But there also needs to be balance. Along with ensuring there are consequences for criminals, we need to play our role in addressing the root causes. In 2008 city council unanimously approved *Livesafe* a crime prevention strategy to support at-risk youth.

As a result of this partnership with community and professional organizations, educational institutes, the private sector and all 3 levels of government:

- over 850 inner city kids are now engaged in playing organized soccer,
- Inner city programming has increased by 4,729 hours providing over 21,000 children with new programming.

Working with people like Grand Chief Ron Evans, the Aboriginal Youth Strategy had over 750 youth participating in programs and services for recreation, training and employment development in last year alone.

In collaboration with President David Chartrand and the Manitoba Métis Federation, we have provided funds to support work experience and classroom training by cleaning up our neighborhoods and taking pride in our community.

The Cindy Klassen Recreation Complex is one of the shining examples of the benefits of having invested more than \$63 million in more than 25 new or expanded community centers. After it was renovated and expanded, participation there increased 234%. Another great example is Kildonan Park Pool where pool use increased a whopping 547% after it was upgraded. In fact, with the 2 hour waits in line we have to add more staff to meet the needs of our citizens.

This is why we're also providing an additional million for renovations at community centres as well as doubling our community-centre programming grants, to build on our investments in the hearts of our community, our community centres.

Over the next 5 years, nearly half a billion dollars will be spent repairing our roads and bridges. That's 450% more since I first came to office in 2004, but that is nowhere near what we need to spend on infrastructure.

We all know by now the city only receives 7.3 cents from every tax dollar you spend, while the Province receives 64.9 cents and the federal government receives 27.8 cents. We know there is only one taxpayer. So we need to find a way to receive a share of growth revenue to address the priorities that Winnipeggers expect without putting too heavy a burden on the taxpayer.

And even though, by working with council, we've managed to maintain a 13-year property tax freeze, each and every year it gets more and more difficult to maintain a tax freeze.

So how do we accomplish this?

One of the ways the city is exploring is to gather expertise from others. Last May I was pleased to join with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities to announce the Infrastructure Funding Council. Their mandate was to provide recommendations for funding options to address the significant infrastructure deficit... \$7.4 billion, faced by the city – nearly 4 billion for work that needs to be done now, and over 3 and a half billion for what needs to be done over the next 10 years as our City grows.

We've asked the group to provide a comprehensive list of funding options. I want to thank them all for their diligent work and look forward to receiving their report and recommendations very soon.

I had the opportunity last week in Regina at the first ever National Infrastructure Summit, to talk to Mayor Fiacco about how the Province of Saskatchewan has provided them with a 1% share of the PST to address their infrastructure challenges.

I also spoke with Montreal Mayor Gérald Tremblay about how in Montreal, they've implemented a 1 and a half cent per litre fuel tax to generate funds to go towards fixing their infrastructure. These ideas are happening right now in other Canadian cities.

In addition, I've appointed Councillor Scott Fielding to chair the city's alternate service delivery committee. The committee's mandate will be expanded to look at best practices across North America in:

- reviewing the entire list of services the city provides to ensure we are properly funding those core services, and
- making sure we avoid duplication with other levels of government or the private sector.

I would be remiss if I did not again mention the potential \$350 million dollar problem facing the taxpayers of Winnipeg. The Province's Clean Environment Commission continues to force the City of Winnipeg to remove Nitrogen from our wastewater, despite hard science that shows not only is this a waste of money, but potentially detrimental to the health of Lake Winnipeg.

Dr. David Schindler, world renowned scientist has been researching this for nearly 4 decades. I recently received a letter from Dr. Schindler indicating even more recent studies and data have further backed up the claims of the scientific community and I quote...

"There is still no evidence that reducing nitrogen contributes anything to recovery... There is evidence that in some cases it actually aggravates the problem,

But yet the Clean Environment Commission still continue to willfully ignore science and the facts from the experts.

And while these same scientists have made their educated concerns known to the members of the CEC and the provincial government, the City is still facing the order to spend \$350 million on the removal of nitrogen and an additional 9 million dollars each and every year in operating costs.

I believe that order has a high potential to be a multi-million dollar blunder. Therefore, as your Mayor, I will continue to argue on the side of science and scientists.

As I said earlier, this decade will be one of great promise and great challenges. And once again I ask you, which road will define Winnipeg for the future? Will

we think the challenges of attaining our goals are simply too difficult or too unattainable in difficult, turbulent times?

We have some difficult choices to make in the coming months. But at the end of the day, we have to move forward and we will move forward.

In closing, to quote that modern day philosopher Bob the Builder, "Can we build it? Yes we can!"

Ladies and gentlemen, let's get to work.

Thank you.