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Your vote will make a difference.

By PAUL LEFEBVRE

As we enter the last few days of this municipal election, I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone to cast a vote. Municipal government is the level of government that has the most immediate impact upon citizens: everything from fire and policing services, recreation, housing, safety standards, roads and infrastructure, public health, and support for citizens in need. No other level of government touches your daily life in so many ways.

As a candidate for mayor, I clearly hope you throw your support behind me. However, I encourage all, no matter who you support, to cast a ballot. Recent municipal elections have run at around a 50% participation rate. This is very low - especially considering the importance that municipal politics has on your everyday life and the well-being and future of the community.

Over the last few months, while knocking on doors and in discussions with people across the many communities of Greater Sudbury – old and young, and from all walks of life – I sense a desire for a new direction from local leadership. I share this view. My platform has been shaped by the desire to create a better, growing city; one where tax dollars are respected, and the voices of citizens are heard. This requires that we work together to set priorities for projects and policies that will move the city forward in ways both affordable and sustainable.

I firmly believe we need to grow our tax base. Only through growth can we hope to hold the line on property taxes, and still deliver the services and amenities that make a community a great place to live, work and play. I have publicly stated that I believe our goal should be to grow the city to 200,000 citizens in 20 years.

To achieve growth, we need to invest in ourselves and our city. We need to build the recreational, cultural, and physical infrastructure that make our city attractive and affordable, and to retain and attract new citizens. But again, these efforts must be within our means and sustainable into the future. To do this, we must be transparent, plan well, build well, and manage well.

Sudbury is brimming with potential. The world needs critical minerals and the knowledge to best use them in a sustainable way. Our research facilities, educational institutions, and our mining supply and services sector are well positioned to make the most of these opportunities. We need to market and promote ourselves as the best place in the world to take advantage of the evolution towards an electric, low-carbon future. I believe there is potential for Sudbury to become a centre of manufacturing for battery technology given this resource and knowledge base.

We are also at the forefront of environmental responsibility – our re-greening efforts have transformed our community over the last decades – an initiative that has won international awards and that we can collectively be proud of. Today, these efforts continue in our community and have expanded into new areas of interest. Research being conducted by the Living with Lakes Centre and initiatives at our educational institutions and the private sector promise to keep us the forefront of these important environmental leadership.

I began this final editorial of the campaign by urging every voter to vote. Please exercise that right. No matter who you support, is important to have your voice heard.

If we all participate in the future of our city, I know that, together, we can make good things happen.

My complete platform and editorials can be found on my website at paullefebvre.com.