

For Immediate Release

Remarks by His Worship, Mayor Doug Craig Inaugural Cambridge Council Meeting

Cambridge, Ontario. December 6, 2010...The following outline provides a text capture of the remarks by Cambridge Mayor Elect, Doug Craig. Please check against delivery.

Councillors, staff, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen:

As we begin a new term of an expanded Cambridge Council and my fourth term as mayor, I wanted to welcome all of you here to this historic chamber where so much that is important to us and our fellow citizens is decided. Without taking anything away from our regional, provincial and federal governments, I believe that it is at our municipal council where we can have a profound effect on the everyday lives of the average citizen. This is where civic engagement happens.

With each passing day that I talk with people who come to City Hall or meet me on the street or at community events, the one thing that overwhelmingly characterizes those conversations is the genuine search for solutions to the challenges of living in a growing city. Even though perhaps disagreeing about the means, most people are interested in the outcome, with what we can accomplish together. This city is blessed by an impressive depth of goodwill, from those who are served and those who represent them.

That is why I want first to acknowledge all those who participated in the recent municipal election and committed themselves to spirited campaigns across the city. Obviously, there was a divergent view of issues upon which we sometimes disagreed. Ultimately, the voters made their choice and I would like to at this point welcome in particular our three new councillors: Donna Reid from Ward 1, Frank Monteiro from Ward 7 and Nicholas Ermeta from Ward 8. I look forward to your contributions over the next four years.

And I would like to welcome back colleagues who were re-elected: Rick Cowsill from Ward 2; Karl Kiefer from Ward 3; Ben Tucci from Ward 4; Pam Wolf from Ward 5; and Gary Price from Ward 6.

Congratulations, too, to Jane Brewer and Claudette Millar, both of whom once sat where I'm sitting, for their re-election as Cambridge's representatives on Regional Council. No doubt they will continue as they have mentioned in their

past to keep a close eye on Regional issues and as councillor Millar once pointed out, a constant eye on me.

This speech is a rare opportunity to sum up where I think we've been and to chart out where I hope we will be going. I don't intend to pass that up.

Being a municipal council responsible for managing a growing city means having opportunities for positive change and that is a theme I'll return to several times tonight.

During the election, people talked about the need for change as though it were some new concept. Far from it; change has been a constant from the days that our first settlements were created, right up until today. It is necessary and vital and it continues to be. And I can tell you I believe that as a council we deal in nothing but change and I know we're up to the task. This Council is in the change business, let there be no doubt. And also let there be no doubt that change for people is difficult.

When I said that Cambridge Council has always managed change, I meant it. As but one example, the expansion of Conestoga College on the edge of Blair was assured because of councillors' foresight seven years ago to acquire the land on which it is being built. Our contribution was to hold that land and, though it had doubled in value, to sell it to Conestoga at about what we paid for it. The present unfolding Lang's Farm project is yet, but another example. That's forward planning; that's managing change; that's encouraging growth and deep development for the benefit of all our citizens. And we have done this while prudently managing our finances in a way that has made us the envy and the benchmark for other cities.

This growing city is not the place it was five years ago or fifteen or fifty or a hundred years ago. Where once our neighbours and fellow citizens overwhelmingly laboured with their hands, making everything from shoes and shingles to textiles, today this is no longer the case. Many of those labour-intensive, manual, factory-based jobs that sustained our people and our community, and provided a significant proportion of our tax base, are gone or are going, and most of those will not be coming back. We need to acknowledge this reality, confront it and move on into what I think will be a brighter, healthier future for ourselves, our friends and our neighbours. A city like ours can make a real difference, by our own initiatives and in partnership with senior levels of government, business and industry.

As a council, we don't make jobs; we manage the conditions whereby business and industry make jobs and it will be our task to recognize the knowledge-based economy and employ the various components that together reinvent our local economy. These components must take into account that our local economy is not simply a one-dimensional model, but predicated on quality of life, infrastructure renewal, a sustainable community, competitive taxes and a strategic direction in the clustering of new industries. Together all these parts compose a new, economic eco-system.

That's why we need to understand that our future prosperity lies in high skill, highly productive, advanced manufacturing and design. Therefore, I will be asking my colleagues to work with me to ensure that citizens in Cambridge have every opportunity to move into productive, sustainable, satisfying employment. As an example, the school of architecture has the promise of elevating our community in creating and building a design centre in Cambridge. In January more news about this initiative will be forthcoming. In concert with this, Conestoga College is vitally important in helping our fellow citizens who have lost their jobs retool and acquire the skills to take maximum advantage of this new economy. We need both a local and a Regional strategy to enhance these efforts, to pursue a future of high-impact, high-value jobs even while facing very difficult financial problems and some tough budgets in the first couple of years of this next phase of Council.

In the next four years, I believe our strong focus - certainly my strong focus - will be on the unglamorous, but vital, management of our municipal assets. A friend of mine has said I should ban the word 'infrastructure' from my vocabulary since most people aren't sure what it means. Well, it means the roads and sidewalks, and the pipes and wires that are beneath them. It's the retaining wall on your street, the upgrades and improvements at our senior's centres; its signage and street trees and drainage ditches. For many years, like all other municipalities in Canada, we have been under-funded by senior levels of government who have abandoned us to rely almost solely on property taxes. Out of every dollar of tax collected in Canada, only 8 cents came to our cities while the province and federal governments gobbled up the other 92 cents of the remaining part of that dollar. Because of this disparity and since it became apparent that our cities were in desperate need, the implementation of gas tax money has helped us to now vigorously invest in these assets. Yet, if we're going to have a livable city, with water, sewer, power and communications reflecting the great place we are and want to be, we need to focus and continue to manage those assets that we started in earnest nearly five years ago.

Many people during the election expressed frustration that the issue of amalgamation of Waterloo Region again reared its head, though I should point out, it was not at my instigation nor of this council. My record and council's record has been consistently opposed since we were first elected. With the rejection of the non-binding referendum between Kitchener and Waterloo, it is clear that amalgamation is now a dead issue. I believe even its advocates must accept that we have finally put the issue to rest. Realistically, we will have two-tier government for the foreseeable future, though I continue to think that regional government costs far too much and that we could do just as well or better with joint service agreements among the three cities and the townships, without the waste and expense.

There is no question we need to scale back hiring at the Regional level and manage our citizens' tax money as carefully there as we do here. In line with this, we need to make Regional Government more accountable, balanced in its regional approach and understandable to the region's taxpayers. That is why I believe we should be holding off-year elections for the region at a different time than we do for local councils. At the same time, we must pursue the

fundamental principle of representation by population at that level. I trust that this Council will support me in pursuing a dialogue on these concerns.

But in the meantime I want to seek out a new, more metropolitan approach to Cambridge's role within a suitably diverse Region. Great cities on the world stage are not single tier municipalities; they are metropolitan areas not unlike the Region of Waterloo. This is a fact we can learn from and that's why there is a great deal we can do to collaborate with the other cities and townships to our mutual advantage as equal partners. We already have. We will continue to. There is lots of opportunity for cooperation, as we have with Canada's Technology Triangle and the joint tourism initiative and now the new regional Arts Council. These are examples of the great extent of co-operation that already exists and the basis for the establishment of equal partnerships.

That being said, we won't accept meekly the disinterest that has often been shown towards Cambridge. We will continue to remind everyone that Cambridge is the second largest city in the Region, just behind the City of Kitchener. We will continue to remind everyone that we expect fair treatment especially when it comes to something like transit.

That is why I will not support the present proposed LRT issue sitting on the Regional table. The imposition of a light rail system from Fairview Mall to Conestoga Mall will saddle this city with bills for the next 20 years to serve Kitchener and Waterloo while Cambridge is fobbed off with so-called "adapted rapid buses" that doesn't even meet the region's own definition of a rapid transit system. The fact that it is considered OK to tax Cambridge citizens for a service they are denied is not OK with me. Enough money is available to build a first-rate, rapid bus transit system at half the capital cost and one-third less operating costs for the whole region rather than a partial LRT to serve just our northern neighbours.

Then there is the recent decision to implement "GO-lite" train service between Kitchener and Toronto but to defer indefinitely the much more sensible commuter train service between Toronto and Cambridge, for which we have been campaigning for decades. The facts are that the Cambridge option makes the best sense and deserves a fair hearing. A Cambridge GO service along the CP line answers many of the shortcomings, including overnight storage, track issues and parking that will bedevil service through Kitchener on the CN line. Creating a service that takes a minimum of two hours to get from Kitchener to Toronto (not counting the extra hour there and back from Kitchener for Cambridge residents) is building failure into the system. Rather than being dismissed or ignored on this issue, we should be receiving Regional support to bring GO trains to Cambridge by 2014. That's something for which I will be pushing, I hope with the support of this council and our regional representatives.

Many of you will have seen the "green wall" in our LEED-certified civic administration building next door. It was symbolic of one of our priorities in the last term and is symbolic of priorities in the four years to come - the development of a city-wide green strategy. The first stage will be our efforts to make the whole city corporation green, something that is already underway.

You'll see even more initiatives that will make us more energy efficient, more benign to the environment and putting down a much smaller and lighter carbon footprint.

Our next steps will be to invest in a green task force that can recommend and guide partnerships and initiatives with the private and non-profit sector in Cambridge. That must include more attention being paid to our crown jewel in our midst, RARE, which is indeed a thousand acre ecological gem that needs to be promoted and advanced by policy and practice, recommended to its citizens as a source of pride and distinction. That goes for Dumfries Conservation Area and Shade's Mill, both of which provide us with wild and open places to complement our neighbourhoods and community health.

Our cultural life will be greatly enhanced within the next two years with the building of the Drayton Theatre. I am personally proud of this deal where we get a fully-functioning theatre and performance facility, in partnership with a professional tenant that has a track record of great success. Also, I'm proud of the economic multiplier affect it will have in creating jobs and retaining jobs in Cambridge. In January, the wraps will finally be taken off both the conceptual designs and timetable for this great enterprise. Again, this is an example of foresight and change that I think we need to be proud of.

Finally, I want to make this an age-friendly city. It is not only an acknowledgement that our population is aging and that the first of the baby boom generation will start retiring in 2011, but it's also the right thing to do. We need to get beyond politics and quarrels about this facility or that. We will continue with our three senior's centres strategically located and continue to make them even better, with even more vibrant programming just like our proposal for the frail elderly that is being incorporated into the new Lang's Farm community centre in Preston. We need to look at services - such as snow-clearing, access to government services at all levels - that can enhance quality of life for seniors and, while keeping them in their homes, combat their isolation. We need to continue to work with partners like the Social Planning Council and neighbourhood groups, sharing information and ideas on the need for home care and future, enhanced senior services.

As you can see, what I am sketching is a large agenda for me and for this Council. No one is saying it is going to be easy. Money has always been tight, though carefully managed, here and for the next two years even tighter now as we come out of a bruising recession. Some hard choices will undoubtedly have to be made, as they always are by the people elected to serve you. But, with goodwill and common sense, I believe this Council can still achieve great things on behalf of all Cambridge's residents. You'll note that I say 'residents' because we are more than taxpayers; we are employers, workers, and neighbours. We are customers and helpers, advocates, family and friends. We are artists and parents and teachers. We are inventors, entrepreneurs and merchants. More importantly, together, collectively, we are Cambridge and I look forward to working arm-in-arm with this Council and with my fellow citizens to make our community everything it ought to be as we choose a preferred future of our own choice!

Attn Photo Editors: EVENT PHOTOS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST or visit the events section of our photo gallery at www.cambridge.ca

The City of Cambridge is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. It is strategically located astride highway 401 in Southwestern Ontario, part of Canada's Technology Triangle. In 2010, the population reached over 130,000 people with a multicultural mix and a strong foundation of support services. Cambridge has a diverse economic base with leading industries in manufacturing, automotive, high technology, pharmaceutical, business and financial services and hospitality/retail. The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is an employer with a work environment that offers the opportunity to provide service to the community through creativity and innovation, and with opportunities for career growth and advancement.

For more information on the area or the corporation visit www.cambridge.ca
The City of Cambridge press room is located at <http://www.cambridge.ca/article.php?sid=176>

To opt out of the news release distribution, please send an email to Linda Fegan
feganl@cambridge.ca