

MAYOR DAVE JAWORSKY'S 2017 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor for the Day introduction

Thank you, Mr. Cressman, for that introduction. My name is Michaela Sheinin and I'm a Grade 5 student at Lexington Public School. I want to show you some of the reasons why I love living in Waterloo. I give you the [City of Waterloo community yearbook](#).

2016 was a great year. I think all we need is eight more ideas to make the city even better. We'll start with mine first. I would like to organize a Plant a Tree Day. If we do that, 2017 will be our best year yet.

And on that note, I'd like to introduce my fellow Mayor, Dave Jaworsky.

Mayor Jaworsky's address

Thank you Rotary Waterloo for hosting this event and thank you Mayor Michaela for that introduction.

My presentation today is a reflection of the hard work and dedication of my fellow councillors and City of Waterloo staff. Because of you, and the support of our regional counterparts, we are building a strong, connected and prosperous community. Thank you for being here today.

You know, we live in a great country. For the second year in a row, Canada rated ahead of every other country except Switzerland, in economic influence, citizenship and quality of life. Our country is the envy of people from all corners of the world. I believe our national strength is due, in large part, to cities like Waterloo.

Waterloo is a welcoming, inclusive community. We support and embrace all walks of life, all nationalities, backgrounds and experiences. We know diversity is our strength. Waterloo is a city to be proud of. Waterloo is a city to love. And Waterloo is the city we all call home.

2016 was a banner year for us, as you saw from our community yearbook. We experienced a number of significant accomplishments. As we continue on our positive trajectory, we will look to our strategic plan, created with input from the community and approved by council, to guide our way. We will continue to address the things that need improvement. We will encourage and implement creative ideas. We will engage the public on things that matter most. The things that get us fired up about our city. The things that make **life better in Waterloo**.

And what are those things? There are probably dozens, but I'd like to focus on seven here today.

Life is better in Waterloo because of our active, quality of life.

It's an amazing feeling when you start and end your day knowing your commute will be relatively short and stress-free, and that you can still be home in time for dinner and evening activities with family and friends. We are fortunate to live in a city where everything we need is so close.

We are especially fortunate to live in a region with one of the lowest unemployment rates in the province, thanks in part to the surge in new jobs here in Waterloo. Thalmic Labs, our home-grown inventor of wearable technology, recently opened a 50,000 square foot factory near uptown Waterloo and will employ another 100 people at that location. Shopify Plus is also expanding and plans to hire another 300 positions. The recent opening of Costco created jobs for about 200 people.

Over on the northwest side of Waterloo, we are going to build a 125 acre employment park, enabling about 7,000 new jobs for our community.

A well-rounded community isn't just about living close to work. It's about participating in events like Final Fridays, Winterloo and the Sun Life Financial Uptown Waterloo Jazz Festival. It's about visiting our museum to learn about Waterloo's heritage. It's about getting a world-class education from our elementary, high school and post-secondary institutions. And it's about staying active and healthy at our recreation facilities. This is our Waterloo.

It's important to me that our residents live, work, play and learn here. As our population grows, we will continue to focus our efforts on job creation, business retention, and cultivating a balanced lifestyle to build the strongest community possible.

Life is better in Waterloo because we protect our environment.

About half of our residents live 5km or less from work, yet only 10% of people are confident cyclists. The projects we have underway will inspire more people to try cycling. In our recent budget, we approved 10km of brand new trails to be placed around the city. We are building protected bike lanes on King Street, enhancing the Laurel and Trans Canada Trails with asphalt resurfacing, continued way-finding signage and trail crossing improvements. We are converting our former fragmented trail system to a full active transportation network, friendly for wheelchairs and strollers, friendly for everyone.

Over on the east-side of Waterloo, cyclists and pedestrians are essentially cut off from the city's core because of the expressway. We are improving Lexington Road to make it easier for them to connect with other areas of the city.

The first ION vehicle arrived in February and the remaining 13 vehicles are scheduled to arrive by the end of this year. Testing will take place this spring on the existing Spurline tracks in the Weber and Northfield area. In 2018, ION will begin moving about 20,000 people each day, displacing over 20 diesel-spewing buses to help protect our environment.

I'd like to acknowledge the businesses impacted by ION construction. It hasn't been easy, and we thank you for supporting the project and working through its challenges, with support from the Region of Waterloo, GrandLinq and the City of Waterloo. I'd especially like to thank Patti Brooks, executive director of the UpTown Waterloo BIA. Your efforts to provide marketing support, to help your members deal with the challenges of construction are greatly appreciated. ION is an important step forward for our city and you have been instrumental in helping the uptown through this trying time. Thank you Patti.

You may not have known this, but last year we recorded 1.3M trips on our trails. That's about 10 trips per person going to school, to work or just leisurely passing through. The benefits of an active lifestyle have far-reaching, lasting impacts and I am excited to see how our ongoing efforts will support and encourage a more active community.

Later this spring, we will become the first municipality to pilot an eco-friendly dog waste containment system. This is a Waterloo-based innovation that will convert dog waste into renewable energy. You'll find special containers in St. Moritz Park, Lakeshore Optimist Park, and Bechtel Park. We'll review the program in a year to determine if we can expand into other parks in the city.

We are always looking for ways to increase our tree canopy, and Canada's 150th gave us the perfect opportunity. This year, we will give away 2,017 trees at different events, including at our 25th annual Service Centre Open House and Waterloo Earth Day. I look forward to joining Mayor Michaela and our student councillors at these events.

And what about our newest addition to the David Johnston R + T Park? Sustainable Waterloo Region and respected developer the Cora Group will soon construct an environmentally-friendly building that will actually produce more energy than it consumes. Just think about that for a second. This building is called Evolv1 and it will generate energy to power the entire building. It's an incredible idea and definitely raises the bar for future development. This is a first for North America and it is being built right here, in our own Idea Quarter.

Life is better in Waterloo because we are a learning community.

Imagine travelling from Toronto to Montreal in just 30 minutes. A team of students from the University of Waterloo, called Waterloo, did imagine it and they have conceptualized a high-speed commuter pod called the Hyperloop. The team entered Elon Musk's SpaceX challenge earlier this year, and will compete in a second round later this summer. The University of Waterloo is celebrating 60 years of innovation this year, and 25 years as Canada's most innovative university. When you look at their plans for the future of engineering, including Engineering 7, you know amazing things are going to happen. And speaking of amazing, Canada Day is always a great celebration for the region, thanks to the University of Waterloo, and this year's festivities will be even more special. We are proud to partner with you on this event and we thank you for making Canada's 150th a birthday we'll always remember.

And who could forget Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s visit to Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics last year? He shared his understanding of quantum information after just a short time at the blackboards. That video clip went viral and continues to be seen by millions of people around the world.

Wilfrid Laurier University will officially open Lazaridis Hall next month. This hall is home to the Lazaridis School of Business and Economics, Department of Mathematics, and the Lazaridis Institute for the Management of Technology Enterprises. The mission there is to help promising tech companies scale-up by providing the business leadership they need to succeed here at home, and abroad.

The city recently partnered with Laurier to launch City Studio, an opportunity for students, City of Waterloo staff and community stakeholders to collaborate on creative solutions to municipal challenges. The team at City Studio is currently working on two different projects:

The first relates to our neighbourhood strategy and how we can create more neighbourly connections between students and non-students living around the universities. The second pertains to housing diversification, and how we can increase the number of non-students living in the Northdale area. I look forward to hearing City Studio’s ideas about how we can best tackle these issues. This innovative partnership is one of the many reasons why students, and Maclean’s Magazine, have ranked Laurier as #1 in Canada for student satisfaction.

Still with Laurier, I would like to thank President Max Blouw for his 10 years of leadership and many achievements. He has left an incredible mark on this community and we wish him well as he completes his second term and moves on to a new chapter of his life, with his wife Lynn, in Merryhill, Ontario. Wilfrid Laurier University is well positioned for the future and we look forward to working with incoming President Dr. Deborah MacLatchy.

Conestoga College is also celebrating a major milestone this year – 50 years of building communities and careers. The college has launched an exciting new initiative in celebration of this special anniversary – a major expansion of the Waterloo campus on University Avenue. The campus will feature a new Culinary Institute, increased capacity for the delivery of IT and related programming to fuel the local talent pipeline, and an access hub that will provide services for new Canadians and others across our community as they transition towards successful careers. The rejuvenation of the campus supports our vision for a dynamic education corridor here in Waterloo that is unparalleled anywhere in the country, or perhaps even the world!

My congratulations to the remarkable achievements of our esteemed post-secondary institutions, all of which produce award-winning ideas and graduates of the highest caliber. You are the reason Waterloo is Canada’s education city

Life is better in Waterloo because we are a creative community.

This year, Waterloo Region District School Board will host the 33rd annual Canadian Student Leadership Conference at Sir John A. Macdonald Secondary School. Over 750 students from across Canada will

participate. I look forward to chatting with our students to learn about their innovative spirit and start-up initiatives.

Some of the best creative ideas come from a bunch of Grade 5 students. Last year, Zoe St. Germain was selected mayor for the day because of her pitch for Waterloo Exercise Day. If you search #activeWaterloo, you'll see how her idea quickly evolved into an entire summer project and became one of the city's most successful social media campaigns. I'd like to invite this year's council for the day to take the stage and share their winning ideas to make life even better in Waterloo.

- My name is Elaine Wen and I'd like to start a campaign to motivate girls to get into math.
- My name is Grace Kennedy and I think kids should be able to provide feedback to our council regarding events and activities.
- My name is Jacinta Jameson and I think we should start creating energy from waste - a system called gasification to decrease landfill space and protect the environment.
- My name is Jack Sullivan and I would like to organize a Confederation Walk for Waterloo.
- My name is Mackenzie Dupuis and I would like to plan a bicycle day where people can learn how to cycle safely so we can get active and reduce pollution.
- My name is Parasmai Conjeevaram and I would like to open a Science Centre here in Waterloo, like the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto.
- My name is Uzair Memon and I would like to organize multicultural school events so we can all learn from each other.

Thank you councillors.

We had dozens of contest submissions and these really made an impact. Thank you for sharing your ideas with us today.

What do you get when you take the best and brightest minds and pair them with the best technology? You get a smart city. Our creative ideas are putting technology to work, right here in Waterloo. As part of the Region's Healthy Kids Community Challenge, we added a recreation tile to our municipal app, Pingstreet. You want to know where all the basketball courts are? Download Pingstreet to find out. Want to join a soccer game? Visit PickupHub.net to see what games are happening in your area of town. Earlier this year, we partnered with the University of Waterloo to host an open data event called a hackathon. More than 300 students participated and the winning team created an app called Trip Booster. Google Maps will show you how to walk from Point A to Point B using the most efficient route, but you can Boost your Trip by walking past city points of interest.

And speaking of data, the grand opening of the Communitelch Data Hub, in the old police station in uptown, is scheduled for May 11. The Data Hub will create and support companies to maximize the value of data, and to commercialize all things data. Its proximity to ION and the opportunity to work in a fashionable heritage building were key drivers in choosing Waterloo for their second location. We are committed to investing in urban employment and we are thrilled a successful organization like

Communitech will be the catalyst for our data district. Congratulations Communitech and welcome to uptown!

Life is better in Waterloo because we are future-thinking.

Last year I traveled with Tony Lamantia and the team at Waterloo Economic Development Corporation, to Germany, to the headquarters of three Waterloo-based companies. It was important for these companies to know that we value their investments here, and when they expand operations throughout the world, we want them to think of Waterloo Region first.

WEDC is fully staffed and implementing a regional branding project as well as various foreign direct investment and strategic retention programs. Creating new jobs and attracting new business is critical to Waterloo's growth, but equally important is ensuring these businesses establish roots and make our community their long-term home. WEDC is an important piece of our growth puzzle and we are committed to supporting their efforts.

Talent attraction is a key element of economic development, and University Avenue is our talent's primary transportation corridor. It connects three academic institutions, employment and research facilities, and it's the first thing parents, students, business people and researchers see when they arrive in Waterloo. We have partnered with the three schools and the Region of Waterloo to study the ways we can evolve this corridor into a more attractive, functioning and welcoming gateway. University Avenue will accentuate our talent, our spirit of entrepreneurship and our reputation as Canada's education city.

As you know, the Northdale area of Waterloo is undergoing a major transformation. In the middle of it all is the city's first high school, Waterloo Collegiate Institute. We are working with Wilfrid Laurier University and the Waterloo Region District School Board to explore the ways we can preserve and modernize WCI in a way that reflects the changing demographic in that area. WCI is a valuable asset to our community and the creative ideas put forth for the future of this school will really enhance the Northdale area. I'd like to thank the board for their community-oriented approach to this important project.

Life is better in Waterloo because we connect our community.

Over the next few years, our signature park, Waterloo Park, will undergo quite a transformation.

I'm pleased to announce that harvest tables will be installed in the park later this spring. Each of the tables is about 55 feet long and can seat about 70 people. The artwork for the tables reflects the spirit of Waterloo Park and integrates visually with the park setting. This will be a wonderful place for people to sit and enjoy each other's company in a beautiful, natural setting.

Later this year, we will upgrade the central promenade with segregated multi-use and cycling trails. We will build a second bridge across Laurel Creek thanks to the generous support of TD Bank Group's TD Common Ground Project. We will enhance the entrance on Central Street to make it more welcoming

and pedestrian-friendly. And finally, we will create opportunities for residents and visitors to connect by including gathering places, and lookout points at Silver Lake and the Central Street entrance.

Speaking of Silver Lake, we do have plans to restore it to its former glory. An environmental assessment is planned for next year that will guide our plans to rehabilitate the lake and Laurel Creek.

In 2018, we will begin the design phase for the festival area of Waterloo Park. This area will accommodate a number of cultural activities and programs and provide further opportunities for the community to gather in a large shared outdoor space.

Closer to uptown, we're working on our patio initiative as part of the King Street streetscape project. We want to give business owners more sidewalk space to set up patios for patrons.

And finally, we are exploring the possibility of expanding the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex. Our recreation facilities need to grow and change along with our population and this project will allow for a greater variety of recreation activities and programs. The expanded facility will better meet the needs of our older adults, youth and families, today and into the future.

Life is better in Waterloo because we are a caring community.

We recently completed the first phase of work that will guide our neighbourhood strategy. This project is really about getting to the heart of what makes us good neighbours. We want to go back to that 50's and 60's vibe of looking out for each other, borrowing that cup of sugar and spending time with our neighbours. I look forward to hearing the community's ideas for building a stronger, more neighbourly city, and how those ideas will connect with the research being done by the students at City Studio.

Speaking of neighbourhoods, the United Way has been a tremendous supporter of our neighbourhood matching fund project. Because of their annual funding contribution, local residents were able to create a mural to beautify a spot near University Avenue and Regina Street. Great things happen when we partner with strong community organizations like the United Way.

It's important to cultivate relationships and a sense of belonging in our community. It's also important to support those outside our borders as well. Council recently approved an automatic aid agreement between the City of Waterloo Fire Services and two of our neighbouring townships. If a situation arises along Wilmot Line, Country Squire Road or in St. Jacobs, our firefighters will immediately respond if they are available and can get there quicker. We are proud of the service our firefighters provide and are happy to help those in need when we can. I'd like to thank Mayor Shantz and Mayor Armstrong for your leadership and Chief Hepditch for making this a reality.

2016 was an historic year for Waterloo because four new social housing initiatives were launched. First, Supportive Housing of Waterloo purchased a second property on Erb Street West, for individuals with a higher level of stability and independence. Second, Vera's Place recently opened on Dorset Street. This is a home for women recovering from substance abuse, and was made possible by the leadership of

Emmanuel United Church, the House of Friendship and an outpouring of community support. Third, the YWCA opened a new building on Lincoln Road, providing family-oriented affordable housing. And finally, Ray of Hope partnered with a Waterloo landlord to repurpose his student housing into affordable housing for refugees.

Last September, we hosted a forum in partnership with the Waterloo Town and Gown Committee and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to explore different ideas for affordable housing. We know supportive, affordable housing is important to our economic vitality and we will continue to encourage increased availability across the city.

And finally, I am pleased to announce publically, for the first time, that Hospice of Waterloo Region is planning their future expansion of service with the purchase of five acres of land in north Waterloo. The facility will include a palliative medical clinic and a new 10-bed residential hospice, and it will be located on University Avenue, across from RIM Park. This facility is expected to open in the next two years and will become a central hub for the delivery of integrated hospice palliative care services in the region.

All proceeds from our Service Centre Open House charity BBQ will benefit Hospice Waterloo. Please mark your calendar for that event – Saturday, June 10 at the Service Centre on Lexington Court. I hope to see you there in support of this well-deserving project.

These examples of our caring community make me proud to live in Waterloo, and I challenge this audience and our community to be creative and seek out partnerships and opportunities to build on these success stories.

I am obviously biased but Waterloo really is an amazing city. I'm also aware of the challenges our community faces around issues like affordable housing and aging infrastructure. But this council is passionate and dedicated. We will continue to budget wisely and leverage appropriate provincial and federal funding opportunities to address the issues that impact the quality of life of our residents. We will continue to tap into our homegrown, smart city talent for creative solutions to municipal challenges. And we will succeed. Why? Because life is better in Waterloo.

Thank you.