

June 22, 2005

Mr. Mayor and Council, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this evening regarding the Ward Boundary review currently underway at City Hall. The Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce has a long history of interest in municipal government and we welcome this chance to participate in your consultation.

It was with great interest that we read about your discussion on whether our community should be represented by twelve ward councilors or remain with the status quo.

The Chamber pursued a dialogue with its members on this issue through electronic media and discussed it at its Board of Directors and Advocacy Committee meetings.

As with City Council itself, the discussion was lively and often split on opinion.

In the end, the Chamber of Commerce continues to support the current ward system and the reasons for it set out in the Local Government Reform document in 1999. The Chamber believes that our community is best served by having Councilors with broad

interests and the ability to see whole picture instead of focusing solely on their own community of interest.

It is our sense that moving to a twelve ward system will exacerbate the continuing inside/outside friction we see on this Council. It will also move us back towards the thinking that Councilors should be focused narrowly on their own areas and not on the broader community issues.

The current six ward system is intended to have Councilors deal with the entire city and reduce the problem of dominance by any one area. It was also intended that Councilors act as a policy setting Board of Directors, if you will, and that they not get embroiled in the minutiae of the day to day workings of City Hall. The Chamber of Commerce supports this role for City Council.

In conclusion, the Greater Sudbury Chamber of Commerce recommends that City Council remain with the status quo of six wards. It's only been five years since amalgamation and this is the second time the issue has arisen. This system should work if each elected member accepts that he or she is responsible for direction of the entire City and not just his or her ward. A solid, sustained effort to make amalgamation work will result in a stronger City of

Greater Sudbury and also enable us to evaluate the success of the current ward system more fairly at some point in the future, should the citizens of Sudbury deem it to be an important issue.

Thank you.