

A Charm for Good Governance, by Ian Letourneau

— *for the new mayor and council taking the Oath of Office, May 24, 2016*

Ian Letourneau, Cultural Laureate 2016-2017

The buds of May open, each one an idea,
a tiny leaflet of campaign promises
that will soon bloom across the city.

The city seems different today, doesn't it?
Traffic moves with purpose through the streets,
like a planned motorcade. Flowers perform

their public service and burst like fireworks.
And tonight, we know the streetlights will switch
on, same as they have countless times before,

but illuminate differently, with a new veneer
of civic pride. We are knocking on the door
of the future, a collective blueprint shaped

by imagined cityscapes each of us cradle
in our minds. May they be shaped
by the conversations, the hopes and dreams,

collected at doorsteps and kitchen tables.
May millions of songbirds continue to migrate
to our canopy and provide the soundtrack

to your deliberations. May you navigate
the tough decisions with the ease
of a two-lane roundabout. May the Saint John river

not overflex its muscles each Spring.
May the flowers always bloom at their appointed
hours. And may the streetlights, on those darkest

nights, be your guiding stars.