



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

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TO: Finance and Corporate Services Committee

DESTINATAIRE : Comité des finances et des services organisationnels

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**SUBJECT: FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show 2023 Delegate Report
(Councillor Lo)**

**OBJET : Le rapport du délégué du congrès annuel et salon professionnel de FCM
2023 (Conseiller Lo)**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to report to Committee following attendance at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference and Trade Show.

Pursuant to Section 4 of the Council Expense Policy, Members of Council who undertake City-funded travel must submit a written report to the appropriate Standing

Committee detailing their experiences, what they learned at the conference and how the City's position or interests were advanced.

BACKGROUND

The City of Ottawa is the fourth largest city in Canada and the second largest city in Ontario. As a leading municipality, Ottawa is a member of several municipal organizations responsible for advancing important priorities and engaging with upper levels of government. Our participation allows the City to influence policy development at the provincial and national level, while networking and learning from our peers. To this end, Members of Council are invited to attend various conferences, conventions, and meetings both within and outside the municipality.

The City of Ottawa is a Member of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), an organization representing more than 2,000 municipalities across Canada. FCM's Annual Conference and Trade Show gathers municipal leaders from across Canada each year to set common policy goals on key issues.

FCM hosted its Annual Conference and Trade Show from May 25 to May 28, 2023, in Toronto, Ontario. In addition to Councillor Tim Tierney, the City's representative to FCM, the following Members of Council attended this event:

- Councillor Jessica Bradley
- Councillor Sean Devine
- Councillor Theresa Kavanagh
- Councillor Wilson Lo
- Councillor Shawn Menard
- Councillor Ariel Troster

DISCUSSION

Municipal government is the level of government closest to our residents' day-to-day lives. Municipalities are tasked with building and maintaining most roads, operate public transit services, and ensure its residents have safe, clean drinking water, among other responsibilities considered as part of our core mandate.

However, as our population continues to grow, age, and diversify, so too do the everyday needs of our residents. Increasingly complex demands on municipal services and recognition of the various intersectionality that exist have revealed pressures within the fiscal framework that show its datedness.

Evolving challenges like housing, climate change, and community safety are typically viewed as within the mandate of the upper levels of government, and even though key pieces to address those challenges lie with them, it's municipal government and resources that have the on-the-ground knowledge and experience. The success of Canada's municipalities is the success of Canada, but constraints within the current fiscal framework are limiting our ability to lead and innovate.

The theme of FCM's 2023 annual conference and trade show was "Local Action, National Results," reflected in the content of the opening plenaries and keynote speakers at the conference, including MPs Melissa Lantsman, Elizabeth May, and Jagmeet Singh.

Through the FCM's advocacy, the hope is municipalities like Ottawa could become better equipped financially to address national problems at the local level.

It was certainly a unique experience to meet many municipal leaders from across Canada. From coast to coast to coast, the experience, talent, and leadership that's availed themselves to local public service is incomparable. It was rewarding learning about other cities (especially those in other provinces) and their relationship with their provincial and federal governments. Other municipalities were also quite interested in Ottawa's experience with the federal government physically so close.

Aside from the plenaries and keynote speakers, there were also study/technical tours and seminars for delegates to attend. A sample of tours and seminars I participated in include:

- SmartTrack, Ontario Line, and transit-oriented communities – a walking tour of several new TODs along the Lakeshore West GO Train line built in the last two decades.
- Union Station revitalisation project – a tour of the renovations that have been ongoing at the station since 2010, including improved passenger amenities, attractions, and a bid to make Canada's largest transit station more of a destination on its own.
- Bathurst Quay neighbourhood decarbonisation – a technical look into a once industrial area and environmental initiatives in new buildings, retrofits to existing buildings, and creating a friendlier community space across the channel from City Centre Airport

- How to build great public spaces and facilities – seminar on financing, consulting, procuring, and building facilities to benefit as many residents as possible.
- The ripple effect of food production – panel on how good agriculture benefits urban residents.

Overall, it was a rewarding experience, one I hope to repeat next year at FCM's 2024 conference in Calgary, Alberta.

CONCLUSION

It is through the commitment of Members of Council, to attend conferences like the 2023 FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show, that the City of Ottawa's interests are advanced.

Wilson Lo
Councillor, Ward 24 Barrhaven East