



SUBJECT: Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Conference

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Office of the Mayor

Report Number: MO-05-19

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers:

Date to Committee: July 8, 2019

Date to Council: July 15, 2019

Recommendation:

Receive and file Mayor's Office report M-05-19 regarding the 2019 Federation of Canadian Municipalities conference.

Background and Discussion:

From May 30th to June 2nd, the Mayor, City Councillors and select staff members from the City of Burlington attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) annual conference and trade show. This year's event was held in Quebec City and is the largest gathering of municipal elected officials in Canada. Attendance this year was the highest they have ever seen.

Being present at this event provides our leadership team with opportunities to network and partner with peers on shared issues and ideas, to attend targeted workshops on a variety of relevant municipal issues, and to participate in study tours on topics like smart mobility, assistance for people in crisis, preserving built heritage, and more. With the upcoming election this fall, we also had a very timely opportunity to hear from each federal party leader on the way they intend to work with municipalities if elected.

Funding for the Mayor and Councillors to attend is provided by Halton Region and budgeted for on a yearly basis. The cost of attendance by other relevant staff was charged to their area's related pre-approved travel allowance budget.

Councillor Rory Nisan ran for membership on the FCM Board of Directors, and won, so he will bring our local voice to the table for the next year.

From my own point of view, I appreciated the heritage building study tour where I saw how they are revitalizing their heritage sites, primarily as a tourist draw. I got a lot of value from the urban tree canopy tour and heard about their citywide tree bylaw and supporting initiatives. The emerald ash borer beetle is a problem there as well and I was interested to learn their management and mitigation approach.

Hearing every federal party leader voice their commitment to predictable, sustainable infrastructure funding was great to experience first-hand, with one speaking about giving municipalities more authority through a Charter City program (similar to what Toronto is proposing). I've asked staff to explore the prospect more deeply and report back on that possibility.

I was very impressed to see how old Quebec City had managed to put all their underground parking underneath their public parks, making their ground level public spaces beautiful and environmentally friendly. These tours really open our eyes to things that we may not know are possible in our own cities.

To provide further context on the benefits of attending, the following insights from some of our city councillors have been submitted:

Councillor Rory Nisan, Ward 3:

- a) I was honoured to be elected to the FCM Board of Directors at the Annual Meeting in Quebec City. With this role, I will be Halton's representative on this national board. We will bring Canadian municipalities to the federal government in Ottawa. Now I will be able to take Ward 3, Burlington and Halton issues to the national table.
- b) I appreciated the opportunity to meet other councillors from around the country and to learn from their experiences as locally elected leaders. I was struck by the common interests across the country and especially within Ontario.
- c) The workshops and the trade show allowed me to learn about best practices from around the country and to see some new products and technology that may become valuable to Burlington in the future.

Councillor Shawna Stolte, Ward 4:

"I felt very fortunate to be able to have attended this year's Federation of Canadian Municipalities Conference. As a new Councillor it was fascinating to have the opportunity to network and learn from municipal-level elected officials from across the country. I am a firm believer in not "re-creating the wheel" and I believe that as I learned from other communities, I was also able to share some of the awesome initiatives and best practices that we support here in Burlington/Halton.

Some of my most valuable experiences came from joining other delegates in learning about the Quebec City Public Library System and getting an inside look at the innovative strategies that incorporate heritage building enhancement, digital technology and other measures designed to help meet citizens' needs. I also gained insight by studying energy recovery and the environment by touring the Quebec City biomethanation plant, slated for construction between 2019 and 2022 that will use food waste and sewage sludge to produce renewable natural gas and fertilizer.

All in all, this was a tremendous learning opportunity and I really appreciate the opportunity to have attended and return with ideas for our community."

Councillor Paul Sharman, Ward 5, reported the following key highlights:

- a) Learning from other municipalities and industry specialists on emerging and important topics such as creative financing for heritage preservation, energy source development, etc... by participating in workshops and study tours.
 - b) It's critical to ensure Halton and Burlington have representation on the FCM board, which we now do with our own Rory Nisan representing us, in order to make sure the Federal Government shifts its priorities to align with the needs of everyday Canadians.
 - c) It's the only place to obtain perspective on matters that challenge all municipalities and Canadians across the country by meeting and learning from other elected officials, federal government leaders and trade show vendors.
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Conclusion:

Overall, those who attended gained valuable insights, relationships, and learnings to bring back to their roles and to our city. It was a worthy use of time to attend and we look forward to participating in future years as well.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

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