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# Report to council

FCM's Board of Directors meeting and  
Advocacy Days

Ottawa, ON

December 6-8, 2022

*This document summarizes key updates from the most recent meeting of the Board of Directors of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). It is designed to support board and committee members in reporting back to their local and regional councils on their progress with FCM.*

December 2022 Report to council

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*FCM’s Board of Directors met in Ottawa, ON (December 8, 2022).*

## Message from FCM's president

Dear Board and committee members,

As the year draws to a close, I'm happy to report that our collective municipal voice was greatly amplified by last month's series of high-profile events in Ottawa.

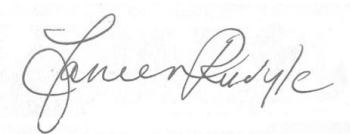
From December 5-8, FCM brought to Ottawa our Board of Directors meeting, the December meeting of FCM's Big City Mayors' Caucus (BCMC), and the latest edition of our Advocacy Days.

Held in our nation's capital, FCM facilitated direct meetings with a diverse set of federal parliamentarians from all major parties, including Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, government ministers including Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities Dominic LeBlanc, numerous MPs from the official opposition Conservative Party of Canada, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh and members of his caucus, plus an MP from the Bloc Québécois.

These high-profile events were conducted professionally, passionately, and with a close focus on the responsibilities we have to Canadian communities. The engagement allowed us to highlight our key priorities ahead of Budget 2023, including the design of renewed infrastructure programs, tackling housing and homelessness, implementing better climate adaptation and mitigation measures, and pushing to resolve the RCMP retroactive costs issue.

Our Board of Directors meeting served as an excellent opportunity to underline these key issues, welcome newcomers and prepare for a productive new year. As Board and committee members, you all play an important role in serving our communities' interests, providing much-needed oversight, and keeping FCM strong—into the new year and beyond.

Sincerely,



**Taneen Rudyk**  
FCM President  
Councillor, Town of Vegreville, AB



## Context and key points

December's combined Advocacy Days, BCMC meeting, and our Board of Directors meeting took place amid important developments and a changing political and economic context.



*FCM's leadership and Big City Mayors' Caucus met with PM Justin Trudeau in Ottawa, ON on December 6, 2022*

**Changing national circumstances:** Economic uncertainty and the impact of inflation, underlined in the federal government's Fall Economic Statement in November, are clear points of focus for elected officials in Canada. Combined with the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadians and their communities are dealing with considerable challenges as we look forward to 2023.

**Pre-budget priorities:** FCM hosted these meetings with a focus on key topics: including unlocking the next generation of infrastructure for Canadian communities, and the steps necessary to address the housing and homelessness crises. Additionally, putting in place stronger climate adaptation and mitigation measures across the country was a key priority, with the country experiencing more extreme weather events. These urgent issues, among others, were prominent during the meetings, being priorities for FCM and our members. The concrete solutions that FCM is recommending were presented to all attendees in the form of our concise [leave-behind document](#).

**Rural and small communities:** Discussions were also distinctly focused on advancing FCM's advocacy for communities of all sizes, including the ongoing issue of resolving retroactive costs associated with the latest RCMP collective bargaining agreement, the importance of improving rural and remote connectivity through the Universal Broadband Fund, and the critical role played by inter-community transportation operations.



**High-profile BCMC meeting:** The week of advocacy launched on Monday, December 5 with a meeting of FCM’s Big City Mayors’ Caucus. Chaired by Halifax Mayor Mike Savage, this meeting brought together the leadership of some of Canada’s largest cities, with a strong focus on unlocking housing supply as well as tackling acute homelessness—including the need for better mental health services as part of measures to address homelessness.

With cities acting as key engines for Canada’s growth, the push for strengthened partnership was clear. The caucus welcomed the adoption of the National Adaptation Strategy but called for investment beyond November’s announced top-up to the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund. This is required to address the true impact of extreme weather events that have struck the country, such as the historic scale of damage done by Hurricane Fiona in September, as well as future events.

**Engagement with the Prime Minister:** FCM leadership and the BCMC also met with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, with the caucus urging both the expansion of the Rapid Housing Initiative to generate more positive progress on housing unit construction, and the expedition of the co-development of an urban, rural and northern Indigenous Housing Strategy in Budget 2023. The caucus also called on federal authorities to commit to a permanent doubling of the Canada Community Building Fund to drive predictable core infrastructure renewal and recommended accelerating the launch of the Permanent Public Transit Fund to kickstart major transformative projects.

**Advocacy across party lines:** The kick-off of FCM’s Advocacy Days on the morning of December 6 provided an excellent opportunity to highlight key priorities as we enter the vital pre-budget period. The numerous meetings focused on the most pressing issues facing Canadian communities today, and were categorized under banners including infrastructure, housing, and climate mitigation. These meetings led to countless direct interactions between federal representatives from all parties and municipal leadership, allowing for a distinct and full picture of community needs.

**Federal presence on the ground:** Federal representatives of all political stripes contributed to FCM’s Advocacy Days in the form of panel discussions, side meetings, fireside chats, and keynote speeches. These included two shadow ministers from the Conservative party of Canada, MPs Gérard Deltell and Scott Aitchison, who contributed to a special panel discussion, with Deputy Leader Melissa Lantsman also in attendance. Additionally, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh delivered a keynote address to the FCM’s Committee of the Whole, with a fireside chat delivered by Minister Dominic LeBlanc. This demonstrated the calibre of political engagement that FCM has been able to drive in Ottawa—enabling meaningful interactions with federal decision-makers from across the political spectrum for those FCM members in attendance.

**Addressing Political Intimidation:** A special panel discussion was held alongside FCM’s Committee of the Whole on December 7, addressing the increased harassment of elected officials. A growing problem in Canadian society, especially for women and people of colour, this panel discussion sought to focus on this serious problem and how to combat the increase of abuse and threatening behavior, which represents a threat to all orders of government and civil society.

**Hydrogen Innovation:** On December 8, a special presentation was given on the Edmonton Region Hydrogen HUB. A coalition of municipalities, cities, advocacy groups, and First Nations have come together to create a Canada-first: the country’s first HUB for Hydrogen production. Presented by Alanna Hnatiw, Mayor of Sturgeon County and Chief George Arcand Jnr. of Alexander First Nation and Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations, this special event outlined the huge potential benefits this project could bring to the region, including a wealth of direct municipal applications.

# Report from Board

FCM's member-elected Board of Directors met December 8 in Ottawa, ON, with municipal leaders from coast to coast to coast gathered to discuss collective municipal priorities ahead of the end-of-year parliamentary break.



*FCM's Board of Directors meets in the Chateau Laurier ballroom in Ottawa, On on December 8, 2022*

- President Rudyk's report outlined current priorities for FCM and provided an update on the advocacy meetings with MPs, Ministers, party leaders and the Prime Minister throughout the week.
- President Rudyk stressed the need for unity and collective action among municipalities, noting the best way to achieve current priorities ahead of Budget 2023, as outlined in FCM's [leave-behind document](#), is to advocate as a whole, with conversations had this week potentially yielding results in the spring.
- The President spoke of the urgent need to continue to push for a comprehensive solution to the RCMP bargaining issue.
- Following municipal elections across a number of provinces this fall, six new board members were welcomed and ratified as directors of the board: Paul Ainslie, Councillor, City of Toronto, Andrew Black, President of the Union of Municipalities of New Brunswick, Brenda Chisholm-Beaton, President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities, Jen Ford, President of the Union of BC Municipalities, James Pasternak, Councillor, City of Toronto and Joe Savikataaq Jr., President of the Nunavut Association of Municipalities.
- President Rudyk highlighted that a call for nominations for vacant board seats will be issued in mid-December, regarding vacant caucus seats in BC, ON, QC, and PEI, with the closing date for nominations in set for January 30.

- FCM’s CEO Carole Saab provided more detail on the successful advocacy for substantial new funds invested into municipalities via the Green Municipal Fund and the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund as part of the **recently announced** federal National Adaptation Strategy. CEO Saab outlined the importance of these advancements, for FCM, the municipal sector and for Canadians, to help in the wake of floods, fires and other climate disasters, but acknowledged that more remains to be done.
- Kitchener Mayor Berry Vrbanovic provided a report on the BCMC meeting and welcomed new additions to the BCMC caucus including Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe, London Mayor Josh Morgan, Hamilton Mayor Andrea Horwath, Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham, Vancouver Mayor Ken Sim and Surrey Mayor Brenda Locke.
- FCM First Vice-President and Township of Gore Mayor Scott Pearce, presented the report from FCM’s Finance and Audit Committee in his role as Chair. The committee’s November meeting was focused on preparations for the year-end audit. A partner and a senior manager from Deloitte presented the audit plan, which probed on any potential risks, and no issues were raised. The Chair reported that the committee was satisfied with all the information presented as part of the November Finance and Audit Committee work plan.
- FCM President Taneen Rudyk presented a report from FCM’s Human Resources Committee. This noted the recent appointment of Mathieu Bélanger as Executive Director of Policy and Public Affairs. FCM currently has 278 active employees, and President Rudyk noted strong continuity and performance across FCM’s workforce.
- President Rudyk also noted FCM’s continued commitment to being a people-centred organization, reporting on a successful, first in-person staff gathering held in Ottawa in October.
- Third Vice President and Vancouver City Councillor Rebecca Bligh presented a report from the Governance Working Group. The Working Group is advancing its work with the Institute of Governance to produce recommendations on Board Effectiveness. For a number of reasons, finalizing the board survey and report has had delays. Accordingly, the group has shifted its deadline to deliver recommendations from this report to the upcoming Board of Directors meeting in March.
- Rural Municipalities of Alberta President Paul McLauchlin provided an update on a meeting with the Provincial and Territorial Association Presidents. This meeting focused on the need for a coordinated strategy to meet critical shared priorities between orders of government and ensure municipal autonomy, particularly in the push to deliver and support housing. The group agreed to schedule an additional meeting early in 2023.
- Chair of the Francophone Network and Municipal Councillor for the Mitigomijokan district, City of Gatineau, Anik Des Marais reported that the position of Vice-Chair of the network is currently open to eligible applicants, and stressed the importance of strengthening the network, adding new members, and supporting French-speaking communities across the country at this time.