

FCM

Sustainable Communities Conference 2016

in review

February 10-11, 2016 Ottawa, Ontario



- Conference Highlights
- Session Summaries
- Policy Notes
- Further Reading
- Leadership Spotlight

Presented by

PUBLIC SECTOR DIGEST
INTELLIGENCE FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR. ®



with Better Results Fewer Resources

In this current environment of low interest rates and increasing energy costs, investing in energy efficiency projects makes more sense than ever.

LAS has three services to help budget-conscious yet capacity-constrained municipalities reduce energy and save money.:

1 The LAS Recreation Facility LED Service is a complete turn-key solution combining top quality product, extended warranties, robust photometric design, full installation management, and commissioning services, plus finance options.

The service designs and replaces high-bay lighting with LEDs and advanced control systems in arenas, recreation facilities, transit, and public works garages, or wherever there are high ceilings. Factor in the cost of maintaining an old and expensive lighting system versus the immediate savings which LED lighting can provide, and the answer is clear!

2 The more than 130 municipalities using the LAS LED Streetlight Upgrade Turn-Key Service are enjoying more than \$11 million dollars in energy and maintenance savings per year.

A typical project reduces energy by 60-80% and maintenance costs by up to 80%. Add-in the efficiencies gained by proper lighting design, the valuable utility incentives in market (more than \$14 million to date), and the other societal and environmental benefits are just some of the reasons to upgrade your lighting network.

Upgrading your streetlight network is quickly becoming a no-brainer for municipalities interested in sustainability.



3 It pays to have a plan for as Yogi Berra said:

“If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else.”

Planning can be an expensive and time-consuming process that sometimes sits outside of daily operations. LAS makes it easier with the Energy Planning Tool (EPT). EPT enables municipalities to create straightforward energy management plans and track ongoing energy projects in municipal facilities for only \$250 per year. Log on and find out how EPT works and how your municipality can benefit from it.

LAS.on.ca
P: 416.971.9856
E: las@las.on.ca

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) convened its annual Sustainable Communities Conference (SCC) from February 10th to 11th in the City of Ottawa. Following on the heels of the COP 21 Climate Change Conference in Paris, Canada's municipal leaders, managers, and sustainability officers gathered to share best practices, challenges, and innovations in local sustainability.

For the first time in the history of the FCM SCC Conference, Canada's Minister of Environment and Climate Change was in attendance. The annual event also took place just one week after Ontario experienced record-breaking warm temperatures for February, and one week before a record-breaking snowfall descended on our nation's capital.

In the opening address to the delegation, FCM's CEO Brock Carlton described several of the impressive global research initiatives underway to tackle climate change, from experimentation with mirrors in space to reflect sunlight, to the dissemination of sulphur in the atmosphere to cool global temperatures. But for Brock Carlton, local sustainability initiatives hold the greatest promise for global impact, as community-driven action multiplies and outcomes accumulate. To the delegation of municipal innovators, he stated, "the most important work that's happening is your work."

The role of local government is to experiment with tailored sustainability plans, programs, and pilots that fit the needs and capabilities of each individual community. When something works well, it's up to municipalities to share those wins with their peers, with organizations like FCM providing a platform to highlight success stories.

This PSD Review of the FCM SCC 2016 Conference provides an overview of the strategies, successes, failures, and insights that were shared in Ottawa. With policy notes, suggested further reading, and leadership spotlights, delegates and non-delegates can use this resource as a catalyst to connect the dots between the best practices presented in Ottawa and their application to your respective communities. Share the 2016 FCM SCC Conference Review with your colleagues to start a conversation about sustainability in your community or to advance your sustainability initiatives already underway.

DAY ONE

National Energy Benchmarking Framework

Having a firm grasp of your community's performance in any policy area in relation to other communities helps to incentivize action and monitor progress during implementation. This is certainly true in the world of sustainability. In an opening workshop at the FCM SCC, expert panelists discussed how a standardized approach to energy benchmarking in Canada simplifies policy development and implementation. Thomas Mueller, President and CEO of the Canada Green Building Council, explained that existing buildings are crucial to reducing energy use and GHG emissions in our communities, with buildings and homes contributing to more than 50% of GHG emissions. In order to incentivize action in the market to reduce energy inefficiencies in our buildings, a national energy benchmarking framework is required. Mueller argued that a national framework would help coordinate efforts for GHG reduction, promote greater uptake by industry, and enhance capacity for policy development.

For David Ramsle, Principal with Integral Group, the key to increasing building energy efficiency is making benchmarking data public. "Things that are measured tend to improve - making this data public really turns on the heat" said Ramsle. He pointed to the [City of Philadelphia](#) as a leader in energy benchmarking data visualization – the first city to interface with a GIS platform to display a heat map of their worst performing buildings. In Canada, all eyes are on the Ontario government's proposed amendments to the Green Energy Act, which, if passed, could require mandatory disclosure policies for building energy usage by next year.



FEDERATION
OF CANADIAN
MUNICIPALITIES

FÉDÉRATION
CANADIENNE DES
MUNICIPALITÉS

Green Municipal Fund

The Green Municipal Fund: more than just funding!

- We inspire innovation by sharing best practices, project examples and lessons learned.
- We connect leaders and communities with experts, peers and allies across Canada.
- We build municipal capacity with training, tools and resources.
- We help finance innovative projects at competitive rates.



**Contact a GMF advisor today for
more information: 1-877-997-9926**

Turning Social Capital into Sustainability Success

Social capital – that is, human networks and relationships – is increasingly recognized as an important facet of resiliency. Dr. Lucy Cummings, Executive Director of Faith & the Common Good, Canada’s sole national interfaith sustainability network, encouraged local governments to partner with faith organizations to access vulnerable populations after extreme weather events. Local governments can’t do it all. Such partnerships can strengthen response and recovery. Dr. Cummings made it clear that social infrastructure is as important as physical infrastructure in protecting our residents from the increasingly volatile elements.

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

8 80 Cities

We exist to create safe and happy cities that prioritize people’s well-being. We believe that if everything we do in our public spaces is great for an 8 year old and an 80 year old, then it will be great for all people. Learn more [here](#).

As Executive Director of 8 80 Cities, Emily Munroe works with communities to bring people back to public spaces. She described how such projects can have a big impact without breaking the bank. For example, 8 80 Cities and Cochrane, Ontario, a small community of 5,340 people, worked with local police to implement a bike share program using lost and damaged bicycles to foster social and environmental sustainability.



Canadian Water Network
BLUE CITIES 2016

Water Resiliency for the New Normal

MAY 18-19, 2016 | TORONTO

bluecities.ca



Improving Human Health through Better Urban Forest Ecosystems

The link between trees and environmental health is widely accepted, but the impact of trees on human health does not receive as much attention. The cost of hospitalization due to air pollution, which is directly related to tree cover, amounts to approximately \$1 billion each year. By contrast, adding more trees to a community increases our mental wellbeing while decreasing our risk of cardio-vascular disease, as Mike Rosen of Tree Canada and Laval-based Cardiologist François Reeves explained.

POLICY NOTE

1 kg

Average amount we eat daily

2 kg

Average amount we drink daily

10-20 kg

Average amount of air we breathe daily

Panelists discussed tested ways that municipalities can improve their urban forest systems. Paul Hambidge, Urban Forestry Specialist for the City of Peterborough, discussed the importance of canopy cover, advising that for every mature tree removed, three should be planted in its place to sustain the urban forest. From fostering a tree-friendly culture to adopting an urban forest strategic plan to establishing a volunteer program to detect pests, municipal leaders left this session equipped with plenty of practical ideas that can be implemented in their own communities.

Keynote: The Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change



As the first Minister of Environment and Climate Change to attend the FCM Sustainable Communities Conference, Minister Catherine McKenna took the opportunity to announce \$31.5 million in Green Municipal Fund (GMF) grants for 20 sustainable municipal projects across Canada. “Innovative projects like the ones supported through this Fund provide concrete examples of how our cities and communities contribute to climate protection” said Minister McKenna. “These projects benefit the environment and economy, and generate lasting value for citizens and their communities.” Projects to be funded through FCM’s Green Municipal Fund include the City of Varennes’ net-zero, energy-efficient multifunctional library, the Town of Ladysmith’s wastewater treatment plant upgrade, and the City of Halifax’s [Solar City project](#), which will install solar hot water systems and efficient water fixtures in homes.

On Canada’s role in tackling climate change, Minister McKenna said “We are determined to work in a spirit of partnership to establish Canada as a global leader in reducing emissions and building a low-carbon economy.” The Minister ended her address by issuing delegates the following challenge: “I am counting on you to become champions in your towns and cities, to adopt forward thinking policies, and to take real meaningful actions that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”



The Minister has given us a good indication that her government is ready to work with us on sustainability, and in fact encourages us to step up the pace.

- FCM President, Raymond Louie

Stronger Together: Building First Nation-Municipal Partnerships

POLICY NOTE

Community Infrastructure Partnership Program (CIPP)

CIPP is an interactive capacity building program that strengthens relationships between First Nations and municipalities. With the help of workshops, webinars, and mentors, participant communities develop joint service agreements, with a focus on water and sewage. Find out more about CIPP [here](#).

Relationships between First Nations and municipalities are not only possible, but with determination by both parties, they can also be strong and sustainable. Mike McKenzie, Chief of Innu Takuaikan Uashat Mak Mani-Utenam and Réjean Porlier, Mayor of Sept-Îles, Quebec, told delegates how the First Nation community has provided services to Sept-Îles successfully for 15 years.

Chief McKenzie said that personal relationships, rather than simple business relationships, are the key to making the partnership work. Likewise, Chief Susan Miller of Katzie First Nation and Mayor John Becker of Pitt Meadows, British Columbia shared their experience working

together under the CIPP program, resulting in the creation of three historic agreements on communication protocols and the provision of water, sewer, and fire protection services. The two communities, who had limited contact just a few years prior, now have a respectful and mutually beneficial working relationship. Mayor Becker suggested that municipalities not hesitate to ask questions of First Nations on matters they don't fully understand.

It's important for municipalities to view First Nations not as part of the problem, but as part of the solution.

- Chief McKenzie

DAY TWO

My Hometown in 2050

In the plenary session kicking off Day Two of the conference, panelists shared best practices and strategies for cities to work toward becoming low-carbon communities by 2050. The expert panel also predicted what communities might look like if this goal is met. Brendan Shane of C40 Cities suggested that municipalities focus on being compact and connected in order to be sustainable by 2050. Good governance is key to achieving this goal, by breaking out of the 20th century mould of transportation, sprawl, and how we currently build. Julia Langer of the Toronto Atmospheric Fund said that focusing on health and social infrastructure is also a critical part of the equation. For example, greenspace is integral to health, and more enjoyable communities are created when that notion is recognized by policymakers. It may seem like a long road ahead, but great strides have already been made. Deborah Hartford, Executive Director of the Adaptation to Climate Change Team (ACT) sees the future city as a safe place to invest in businesses and property alike. “We’re in the middle of a revolution for rebuilding cities for the future” said Hartford.

Making Natural Assets Count



Emanuel Machado, CAO, Town of Gibsons

Asset management is front of mind for municipal finance officers and city engineers across Canada. While many communities are looking to complete their first Asset Management Plan (AMP), the Town of Gibsons BC has launched an eco-asset strategy to capture the value of natural capital assets in their asset management program. According to Gibsons’ CAO Emanuel Machado, “a natural asset has no upfront cost and they can last in perpetuity, unlike engineered assets.”

FURTHER READING

[Nature's Role in Achieving Sustainable Municipal Service Delivery](#)

Since launching their eco-asset strategy, Gibsons has been identified as a pioneer in the incorporation of natural capital in asset management planning. Roy Brooke, Principal at Brooke & Associates, explained how several partners, including the David Suzuki Foundation and the Town of Gibsons, have come together to launch the Municipal Natural Capital Initiative, inviting municipalities to participate in a pilot project which will seek to replicate Gibsons’ eco-asset strategy. Expression of interest forms are due March 16th, with 4 to 6 spots available in the pilot project.



[@Josie_Osborne](#), Mayor of Tofino

“Gibsons BC's explicit goal is less infrastructure. Development builds things we have to maintain, let's minimize that.”

THE NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE DATABASE



In 2016, Public Sector Digest launched *The National Infrastructure Database*, a web-based benchmarking tool for Canadian municipalities. The National Infrastructure Database contains detailed information about the state of tangible capital assets across Canada's municipalities and the average cost of infrastructure. Member communities are able to compare costs for specific infrastructure asset categories and sub-categories, asset life cycles, and funding requirements. Through the use of The National Infrastructure Database, senior management is able to conduct a comparative analysis to rank their community's performance among their peers, discover best practices and efficiencies achieved by leading communities, and network directly with those municipalities that are demonstrating the best results.

Contact us to learn how you can start benchmarking your community's asset management program

benchmarking@publicsectordigest.com
519.690.2565

Lean and Green: Efficient Policy Ideas for Rural Communities

Learning from proven sustainability programs is a great way for communities to jumpstart efforts to becoming lean and green, without reinventing the wheel. MRC d'Argenteuil in Quebec worked with local food providers to serve healthy local food to disadvantaged families in the community. To successfully implement a similar project in another community, Jonathan Palardy, Agro-food Development Officer, suggested first conducting a feasibility study and renting or buying arable land to ensure longevity of the project, allowing for a better understanding of people's needs and avoiding high overhead costs.

FURTHER READING

[Growing Sustainably: Municipalities Focus on Revitalizing Underused Sites](#)

Jenelle Saskiw, Mayor of Marwayne, Alberta, described how the village of about 600 people transformed its problem-ridden downtown into an inviting, sustainable town centre in just three years. With the help of FCM, a failing water system was remedied and the downtown core was beautified following consultations with business owners. Mayor Saskiw said the project's success can be attributed to consulting experts and proper planning from the get-go.

[@lisaholmes](#), Mayor of Town of Morinville



"Great job [@jsaskiw6](#)! The Village of Marwayne is a fantastic example for small municipalities across Canada."



Mayor Saskiw describes how the Village of Marwayne Alberta revitalized its downtown

Closing Plenary: Charles Montgomery

LEADERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Happy City

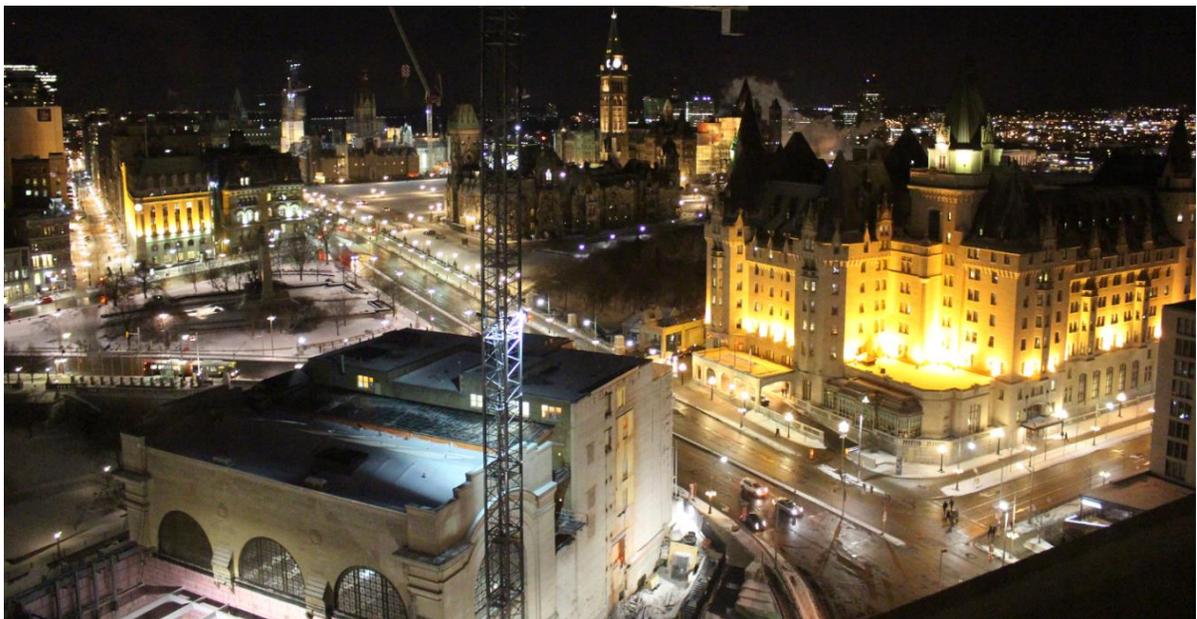
The way we design buildings, neighbourhoods and cities has a profound effect on health and happiness. We draw on a decade of research to make sense of that relationship. We offer evidence and examples to inspire designers, decision-makers and city-dwellers to embrace happy design. And we empower them to take action. Learn more [here](#).

Charles Montgomery, Founder and Principal of Happy City, closed the 2016 FCM SCC. After a decade of research, Montgomery understands that cities are complex systems that influence the way we feel, move around, and treat others – often at a subconscious level. But, in order to foster individual and societal wellbeing, we need to shine the light on the relationship between urban systems, urban design, and human health and happiness. Montgomery recognized that mistakes have been made over the last 80 years that are corrosive to human health and happiness. He urged delegates to help repair the

mistakes of the last century, in order to build cities that are healthier, more connected, more social, and more resilient. Human wellbeing should therefore be a primary focus for policymakers: “Nothing impacts health and happiness as powerfully as social connections. We can and should design cities that foster social relationships.”

The low-carbon city, the green city, the resilient city, the wealthy city, the happy city – they’re the same place.

- Charles Montgomery



Insights of FCM SCC 2016

In Waterloo Region, non-profits work with our local governments and their staff teams, implementing programs and creating the change we all believe is the future of our community. This relationship truly is a partnership, with each having a role to play. The municipality brings its mandate for community betterment and the resources that go with it. The non-profit brings its nimble nature and ability to rally the community behind a movement. Together we are enabled to develop a stronger, more sustainable Waterloo Region. I would encourage all municipalities to look for their local NGO partners, reach out, and strive to create a trusting working relationship.



Tova Davidson, Executive Director
[Sustainable Waterloo Region](#)

It was refreshing to see the discussion of natural asset management make its way into the core discussions at the conference. Recognizing that the natural ecosystem features in our communities provide tangible services to residents, reduce built infrastructure costs, and contribute to maintaining biodiversity is a very important recognition. What I did not hear much discussion of is the added importance of these natural areas in contributing to the health, wellbeing, and general quality of life of people in our communities.



Bill Wareham, Project Manager
[David Suzuki Foundation](#)

The level of commitment to advancing sustainability and the focus on implementation was palpable at the 2016 FCM Sustainable Communities Conference. City staff and politicians, who attended in equal numbers this year, were looking for practical ways to push back on business-as-usual, un-sustainable practices, proposals, developments, and spending, and to advance progressive, game-changing policies, programs, and spending. The questions during all three panels I moderated or participated on were focused on ensuring that local governments provide the leadership and capacity to make progress towards low-carbon communities and economies.



Julia Langer, CEO
[Toronto Atmospheric Fund](#)

Our West Five development will be used as an R&D site to test products that can contribute to the development of more sustainable communities across Canada.

- **Maureen Cassidy, Deputy Mayor, City of London**

DIGEST MEMBERS GET 50% OFF ALL PSD WEBINARS

PUBLIC SECTOR DIGEST

INTELLIGENCE FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR. ®

Developing an Open Data Policy for Public Sector Organizations

FEB 22nd 1-2pm ET

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Adapting to Aging Communities: Developing a Strategy for your Municipality

MARCH 9th 1-2pm ET

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Integrating Long-term Budgeting with Asset Management for Better Outcomes

MARCH 23rd 1-2pm ET

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Creating Collaborative Communities: Managing & Mobilizing the Power of Volunteers

April 12th 12:30-1:30pm ET

[REGISTER HERE](#)

PUBLIC SECTOR DIGEST

INTELLIGENCE FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR. ®



Public Sector Digest is a specialized, monthly research publication written to advance the knowledge and managerial capacity of the public sector. Our areas of research include **Economics & Finance**; **Infrastructure & Asset Management**; **Organizational Performance**; and **Leadership & Management**.

Organizations that contribute to the publication and collaborate with us on research include global consulting and advisory firms, think tanks, leading academic institutions, and practitioners in the public sector. Our target readership comprises the senior executive in all levels of government, as well as general staff and elected officials. We vet ideas, debate policy, and examine theory.

To become a member, call us at **519.690.2565** or visit our website at **www.publicsectordigest.com/membership**.